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Philip D. Jordan

SINGIN' YANKEES

The University of Minnesota Press
MINNEAPOLIS

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Preface

THERE were five of them—four brothers and a sister. Each of the five won some measure of fame from a nineteenth-century America that enjoyed the bizarre and that sometimes bestowed impartial rewards upon charlatan and hero alike. The five Hutchinsons—Asa, Jesse, John, Judson, and Sister Abby—excited interest with their songs of sentiment and reform. Sometimes they lifted their untrained, harmonious voices only to amuse and to entertain; more often they devoted their talents to furthering the burning causes of temperance, dress reform, woman suffrage, and abolition. They themselves never were quite certain whether they were essentially entertainers or reformers, although John, in his old age, characterized himself as a reformer.

They came, these five, from a back-country New Hampshire village and from a rural family that numbered sixteen children. Their parents were good people, but introspective and unpredictable. Perhaps this is to say that temperamental Father Jesse and thwarted Mother Polly were only human. Yet somewhere in the family blood coursed the devils of mental instability. All five singin' Yankees were capable of intense emotion. Judson was subject to the "horrors"; Jesse was far from placid; Asa owned a waspish temper; and even John was sometimes considered queer. Possibly Abby had the calmest disposition.

Sentimentality was ingrained in all of them. They loved music and took to their simple hearts the stirring issues that agitated the United States during the 1800's. They exemplified the romantic period in their individualism, humanitarianism, ideas of progress, reform notions, optimism, and assertive

nationalism. Yet, like many individuals of volatile temperament, the Hutchinsons could manifest canny sense and sound business judgment. Always the battle was between the ideal and the practical. The result for the five was lives of extremes, lives that were paradoxical, lives that teetered between success and failure.

Whatever their personalities, the five became a force in American society. They were the first of America's native troubadours to organize and to travel through the nation. They pioneered in family group singing and they set the pattern which innumerable troupes were to imitate. If their songs were doggerel, they were no more so than much of American life. The five became more influential, were better known in more sections of the country, were on the road longer, and were more colorful than any other singing group. Their voices rang triumphantly in Boston's Faneuil Hall; they took New York by storm; they filled London music halls; they pioneered in Minnesota and established a town to which they gave their name; they sang for Lincoln in the White House and for the troops of McClellan's army; they crossed a fever-ridden isthmus to penetrate California's rivers of gold; they toured a prostrate South after the gray-clad men of Lee's forces had laid down their arms. They knew the theaters of the four points of the compass. They were America's most distinguished, best known, most widely praised, and most thoroughly damned troupe of family songsters. The facets of their careers touched almost every great event of their century. They were in the public eye from the early 1840's until the first decade of the twentieth century. They were in many ways uniquely American.



The story of these singin' Yankees from the Old Granite State has been compiled, over a long period of years, from many sources and with the generous help of many people. First of all, it has been built from the letters, diaries, and scrapbooks

of the Hutchinsons themselves. These numbered thousands of items, both published and unpublished, and were located in many private collections and libraries. Among the institutional libraries in which Hutchinson material was found were: the Library of Congress, Harvard College Library, New York Public Library, library of the New-York Historical Society, library of the American Antiquarian Society, Boston Public Library, Essex Institute, library of the Lynn (Massachusetts) Historical Society, library of the Minnesota Historical Society, Brown University Library, library of the State Historical Society of Iowa, library of the Ohio Archaeological and Historical Society, libraries of the University of Indiana and the University of Minnesota, Minneapolis Public Library, and the public libraries of Haverford, Massachusetts, and Milford, New Hampshire.

Secondly, the narrative has come from contemporary newspapers and journals. The files of more than one hundred and eighty United States newspapers, representing thirty-one states, were consulted. In addition, runs of five Canadian, five English, three Irish, and two Scotch newspapers were used.

A third source of information was the songbooks, musical broadsides, and sheet music, not only of the Hutchinsons but also of the period. The author's own collection of nineteenth-century song sheets and songsters has been particularly useful. The following Hutchinson songsters furnished much musical information: *The Hutchinson Family's Book of Words*, New York, 1851 and 1853; *Book of Words of the Hutchinson Family*, Boston, 1855 and 1858; *The Hutchinson Family's Book of Poetry*, Boston, 1858; Asa B. Hutchinson's *The Granite Songster*, Boston, 1847; *Hutchinson's Republican Songster for 1860*, New York, 1860; John W. Hutchinson and Benjamin Jepson, *The Connecticut Wide-Awake Songster*, New York, 1860; Asa B. Hutchinson and Family's *Book of Poetry*, Boston, 1860; Hutchinson Family, *The "Neb-Rascality!"* n.p., n.d., but about 1854; and the Hutchinson Family, R. B. Hayes, *The People's Choice*, Cincinnati, 1876.

Among the individuals who generously extended advice and information were: Hans Nathan of Harvard College; Franklin J. Meine of Chicago; R. Gerald McMurtry of Lincoln Memorial University; E. R. B. Willis of Cornell University Library; Forest H. Sweet of Battle Creek, Michigan; Florence B. Aldrich of the Lynn (Massachusetts) Historical Society; Mabel R. Gillis of the California State Library at Sacramento; Louis H. Fox and John Tasker Howard, both of the New York Public Library; S. Foster Damon of the Brown University Library; Mildred L. Saunders and Harold G. Rugg, both of Dartmouth College Library; Emma R. Jutton of the University of Illinois Library; Richard S. Hill of the Library of Congress; Geneva Warner of the University of Indiana Library; Mrs. Eleanor Bancroft of the Bancroft Library of the University of California; Dorothy C. Barck of the New-York Historical Society; Orlando C. Davis of the Boston Public Library; Robert H. Yanes of the Harvard College Library; Elizabeth Bond of the Minneapolis Public Library; Lee Dutton of the Miami University Library; Paul M. Angle of the Chicago Historical Society; and J. Helen Campbell and Arthur Conrad of Oxford, Ohio.

Mrs. Elizabeth A. Wakefield and Mrs. Elizabeth Fournie, both of Minneapolis, generously encouraged the author by placing Hutchinson manuscripts at his disposal. Other members of the Hutchinson family were most cooperative. Mrs. Nellie Gray Webster Tolford (Rhoda's granddaughter) welcomed me to the old family farm near Milford and graciously dipped into her store of memories; Dr. H. Dearborn, Milford, a descendant of Judson, quite unconsciously gave me an invaluable bit of information; Mr. W. C. Patterson, Detroit, and Mrs. H. J. Patterson, College Park, Maryland, both aided my search for material; and Mrs. Mary Hutchinson Westland (a granddaughter of David) offered to send data from her home in New York City. The Hutchinson talent continues on the American stage, for Mrs. Westland frequently appears in the theaters of the nation and on the radio.

Spurgen Simpson Beach, of Hutchinson, Minnesota, was

never too busy to open the collections of the Hutchinson Historical Society or to share his knowledge of McLeod County. To Arthur J. Larsen, Lewis Beeson, Bertha L. Heilbron, Mary W. Berthel, and Grace Lee Nute, all of the Minnesota Historical Society, the author is deeply indebted, not only for information placed at his disposal but also for sincere and friendly encouragement. Miss Eileen Longbotham was genuinely helpful when the author was working at the Society.

The University of Minnesota has encouraged the completion of *Singin' Yankees* in many ways. A grant from its Committee on Regional Writing stimulated work on the volume, and the sympathetic counsel of Dean Theodore C. Blegen and of Professor A. C. Krey helped the author over many a rough stone with which the road of research and composition was strewn. My appreciation is genuine.

Finally, I wish to acknowledge the sustained loyalty of two old friends. Edgar W. King of Oxford, Ohio, saw the book grow from an idea to a reality. The wisdom of his suggestions are reflected upon many pages. Charles M. Thomas of Columbus, Ohio, knows the story behind the story and, knowing, made shrewd deductions.

My wife, Marion, and my daughter, Martha, have been unusually patient with me. Certainly the story could not have been written without their sustained interest.

PHILIP D. JORDAN

Minneapolis

November 1945

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Land of Applesauce and Greens

THE parlor, like most of the sprawling house, was sparsely furnished. No carpets covered the broad pine flooring and no pictures gave color to the drab walls.

Jesse's thick fingers fumbled open the Hutchinson family Bible, but before dipping the homemade quill he let his eyes travel through the window to feast upon his land. It stretched hot and dusty in the heat of a New Hampshire August. To the right were the hops ready for harvest and beyond them the fast-flowing Souhegan blended into the cool promise of rising mountains.

Milford's a mighty pretty spot, he mused, and plunged his pen deep into ink. His rough farmer's hands, one steadying the other, laboriously entered the birth of Abigail Jemima, the little girl who lay upstairs in a walnut cradle fashioned in her grandfather's shop.

"It's a good, sound name, like the others," said Jesse softly, and, running a finger down the page, he read slowly: "Jesse, David, Noah, Polly, Andrew, Zephaniah, Caleb, Joshua, Jesse Jr., Benjamin Pierce, Adoniram Judson Joseph, Sara Rhoda Jane, John Wallace, Asa Burnham, Elizabeth, and now little Abby." Opposite Abby's name he entered the date—August 29, 1829—and then wrote: "Our 16th child."

Jesse had wedded Mary Leavitt twenty-nine years earlier, and their life had been a succession of hardships and disappointments. Yet he and Polly—he seldom called his wife Mary—had managed to scrape along. Their first son, named after Jesse, had died in infancy and their first daughter, named after Polly, had died when only three, but the fourteen other children

were lusty youngsters who filled the house from kitchen to attic with squeals and shouts. When Abby was born, young Jesse was fifteen years old, Judson was twelve, John was eight, and Asa was six.

Placing the Bible squarely in the center of the marble-topped table, Jesse left the parlor, being careful to close the door gently behind him. He stopped at the well for a drink and then went back to work in the field. Even the miracle of birth could not hinder the task of harvesting.

The Hutchinson household ran on a strict schedule that had been inherited from Elisha, Jesse's father, who emigrated to Milford about 1779. The first Hutchinsons, Richard and his wife Alice, came from England in 1634. Their son Joseph and three succeeding generations of Josephs carried the family to Elisha, Jesse's father, who was born in 1751 and died in 1800.

The Hutchinson farm upon which Jesse and Polly grubbed a living lay in the granite-strewn valley of the Souhegan, a crooked stream which twisted through Milford from west to east after having given of its lusty strength to mill wheels in New Ipswich, Greenville, and Wilton. Milford, a tidy village of frame houses, lay about forty miles east of Keene, twelve miles from Nashua, and sixteen miles south of Manchester. Its unpaved streets were shaded by white pines, hemlocks, and giant oaks, and the adjacent farm lots were abundant with birch and beech. Sawmills screeched through green timber near Potanapus Pond and on Purgatory Brook. Polly Hutchinson purchased her tickings and shirtings from a Milford mill which had begun operations in 1810. On Sundays the family worshipped in a Baptist meetinghouse which Jesse had helped to build. The children sang in the choir and were the pride of more than a hundred kinsmen who lived in the vicinity.

Father Jesse found little time to idle with town loafers who, knotted in intimate groups along the bar of Buxton's Tavern, talked of Old Hickory Jackson, riled themselves with comments on the United States Bank, and passed acid remarks on the President's "kitchen cabinet." Jesse's pressing concern was for

his children and his crops. In many ways hard, unpredictable, and austere, he was as good a provider as a New Hampshire providence would permit, and he loved his family. Yet this affection did not hinder him from working the boys hard and seeing that the girls did their full share of household chores. Frugality and hard work were the watchwords of the family.

It could not have been otherwise, for one hundred and sixty acres planted in corn, oats, rye, and hops were a relentless taskmaster. Jesse was out of bed by four o'clock, for he felt a day poorly begun if he failed to be dressed by sunup. After the children had breakfasted and listened to morning devotions, each was assigned his duties for the day. The older boys cut and hauled wood—because "father said so"; the younger ones dipped candles into iron kettles filled with tallow—because "father said so"; the girls swept and dusted, being careful not to leave a telltale smear—because "father wouldn't like it."

Polly trained her daughters in the kitchen arts, and Jesse taught his sons to lay a neat stone wall, repair broken plows, and prune the orchard trees. Spring, summer, autumn, winter, in season and out, they worked the farm—plowing, sowing, mowing, hoeing, reaping, and harvesting. Sometimes the lads, to make a tiresome job seem easier, worked in groups of six or eight or even ten, striving to do a "smart job, so that we could secure father's approval." Their hands bore witness to their zeal, for they were not only callused but also scarred and scratched. John carried a hatchet's mark to the end of his life, and Asa lost the tip of an index finger when his brother Ben's ax slipped. Asa never forgot this accident, for it always made him awkward with the cello.

Most of the children, young and old, were harvesting hops the day Abby was born, for late August was the time for stripping the vines and throwing the hops into binlike boxes. For months the boys, guided by Jesse's wisdom, had tended the crop, looking forward to the festivity which a hop-raisin' always brought. A new sister coming on the very day of this annual celebration seemed too good to be true. The girls, in long dresses

and sunbonnets tied under the chin, and the boys, in jeans, striped shirts, and broad-brimmed, straw field hats, worked frantically. When the dinner horn sent its musical notes blasting through the noon heat, the Hutchinsons, led by Jesse, marched triumphantly into the hip-roofed pine farmhouse.

Dinner that day was a feast of thanksgiving. Polly upstairs smiled at the clatter of dishes and smelled the tantalizing odors from platters of corned beef and cabbage, brown bread, and baked apples. She knew that mugs of milk were at each place and that in the center of the table stood a slab of white-oak cheese. She had trained her daughter Sara well. She hoped the little one resting by her side would grow to be equally competent.

Some weeks later, when the hops were sold by Jesse's oldest son, David, a hundred dollars in silver fifty-cent pieces and quarters were piled on the kitchen table. John fixed covetous eyes on this vast treasure and circled the table again and again until David, unable to withstand the eight-year-old's desire any longer, reached into his pocket and gravely extended an old-fashioned copper cent, in payment, he said, for two weeks' work in the field. "In our youth we learned not to despise the day of small things," said John many years later.

Jesse, elated by the price his hops had brought, gave the children a half holiday on a weekday. Such a concession was unusual, for he believed in young and old working six full days and spending Sabbath morning at worship. John and Judson hurriedly dug a pocketful of worms and raced to a pool of the Souhegan, shaded by a fine stand of maples and made cool with the flying spray of a small falls. When they went home, eight fat chub dangled from a forked stick. How proud they were when a spider was larded and their catch fried to a deep and crunchy brown for supper!



As the brothers grew older, they found more and more enjoyment in singing after evening chores were finished. About four

years after Abby's birth, Judson bought a violin from a neighbor for three dollars. He had raised vegetables during the summer and sold them in Milford in order to purchase the instrument. The next year John raised and sold enough beans so that he too could buy a cheap violin, and Asa had been given a violoncello by his older brother Andrew. Two violins and a cello smacked too much of the devil's work to Jesse, who ordered his boys not to practice in the house. They obediently moved to the shelter of a huge granite boulder about a hundred rods from the back door, where they gave "rock concerts" for their own amusement.

"Someday," said John one evening, taking his violin from his shoulder, "I'd like to give a concert sing like the one I heard the Rainer Family give over in Lynn. They came from the Tyrol in Austria just to travel and sing in this country. I'll teach you the Rainers' *Handsome Louise*. We could give a concert in the meetin'-house."

Asa sighed. "I dunno. We like to music all right, but our trainin' is mighty poor. We got only two lessons from our last singin' master, he was so likkered up. An' Phenias Stimpson is too busy cobblin' to help us much more."

"Well, Joshua and Brother Jesse would help us. They got time to lead the Baptist choir and teach music. Anyways, they've taught us more than anybody else has. An' they'd like the idea of a public singin' by the Hutchinsons."

"Maybe so," acknowledged Asa. "But Pa wouldn't like it a mite, an' you know it."

"I know it."

Soberly they packed their instruments away and went back to the woodpile to splinter pine for the fireplace.

The younger sons assumed more and more responsibility about the farm as the older boys left the homestead to provide for themselves as best they could. Young Jesse married his Sussannah in 1836 and went to sell stoves, tinware, and hardware in Lynn. Andrew clerked in Boston, and David and Noah were

farming near Mount Vernon. Judson too tried his fortunes in Boston. John and Asa remained at home.

Going to country school and working a sterile soil was no easy task for two boys in their teens. Their duties seemed endless, and times got worse instead of better. The depression of 1837 paralyzed Milford business, mills along the Souhegan laid off workers, and, to make the picture more depressing, the farmers' season turned off cold, backward, and dry. On the Hutchinson place the only profitable crop was hops, but Father Jesse, caught by the temperance crusade, vowed that, profitable or not, he would never plant the "tool of King Alcohol" again. Although he was a confirmed chewer of tobacco, he shunned spirituous liquor all his life.

The boys—Asa, Judson, John, and young Jesse—signed the pledge after they heard a lecture by Henry W. Hawkins, reformed drunkard and father of the Washingtonians, a temperance society organized in Baltimore in 1840. While still in Milford, the boys formed the prohibitionist views that one day would make tavernkeepers shudder when the Hutchinsons described in lurid song the sot who dissipated his wages, kicked his children, and beat his wife.

Old Jesse, who was becoming more lenient with his children's fondness for music and who was apt to sing a ballad or hymn himself now and again in a resonant, high-pitched voice, liked to hear *King Alcohol*. It was written to commemorate the conversion into a temperance hall of old Deacon Giles's distillery in Salem, Massachusetts. Sung with gusto, it was a favorite of the Sons of Temperance, ladies' temperance unions, and cold-water advocates in Milford.

King Alcohol is very sly
A liar from the first
He'll make you drink until you're dry,
Then drink because you thirst.

King Alcohol has had his day
His kingdom's crumbling fast

His votaries are heard to say
Our tumbling days are past.

The shout of Washingtonians
Is heard on every gale
They're chanting now in victory
O'er cider, beer, and ale.

For there's no rum, nor gin, nor beer, nor wine,
Nor brandy of any hue,
Nor hock, nor port, nor flip combined
To make a man get blue.
And now they're merry, without their sherry
Or Tom and Jerry, champagne and perry
Or spirits of every hue.
And now they are a temperate crew
As ever a mortal knew.
And now they are a temperate crew
And have given the devil his due.

Their devotion to temperance brought the sons of Jesse an invitation to join the Milford Military Band which frequently played at cold-water rallies. John played the bass trombone and Judson, when he was home, performed with the tenor trombone. During the hard-cider campaign of 1840, when William Henry Harrison opposed Martin Van Buren, the Hutchinson brothers swaggered through the streets with the rest of the band boys, making Milford ring and echo with *Tippecanoe and Tyler Too* and *Hard Cider*.

The Milford band, however, was strictly nonpartisan, arranging its programs with a nice balance between music acceptable to the Whigs and songs pleasing to the Democrats. John's eyes opened wide at elaborate Whig parades—with log cabins mounted on wheels and huge barrels of hard cider into which aging veterans of the Revolution sank tin dippers to be passed among the spectators. At Francestown, he heard Daniel Webster, magnificent in blue suit, brass buttons, and buff waistcoat, speak with the effortless oratory that had made his name a byword both in the North and in the South. With courage that

he thought he never possessed, John handed a cheap, little autograph album to the senator, who inscribed it, "Dan'l Webster of Massachusetts." Even old Jesse was impressed and looked at his son with something like respect.

For long years afterward John treasured this album, carrying it with him whenever he traveled and gradually acquiring a collection of really distinguished signatures. John Quincy Adams signed in trembling characters, Harriet Beecher Stowe penned in neat engraving, James Buchanan wrote in large letters, and other notables, including William Lloyd Garrison, Charles Dickens, and Harriet Martineau, inscribed their characteristic autographs.



Despite panics and political campaigns, life went on much as usual on the Hutchinson homestead north of the Souhegan. The eight-room house seemed bigger each year to Polly as her sons moved away to establish themselves on land of their own or in the bustling, business world of Boston. But she was not prepared when, after supper one evening, her husband called John and Asa to him.

"Boys," he said, without attempting to soften the blow, "after your school term closes, I want you to provide for yourselves."

Polly looked at her husband. "The young ones haven't had time for the chores, I know, but Jesse, their schoolin' keeps them mighty busy. They work hard in summer."

He silenced her with a look. "They don't have to go now. After school, I said."

When the boys had left the room, they wondered what had brought on their father's decision.

"He's never used words like that to us before," puzzled John.

"I guess he never felt right about our Thanksgiving concert last year," answered Asa, remembering the signs they had posted on the Town House and the bridge: THE ELEVEN SONS

AND TWO DAUGHTERS OF THE TRIBE OF JESSE WILL SING AT THE BAPTIST MEETING-HOUSE ON THANKSGIVING EVENING AT SEVEN O'CLOCK.

"We sang only the simplest hymns, anthems, and glees, Asa. And father and mother both were there, and Grandfather Leavitt too. Even the minister was pleased, and Squire Livermore's talk on music was a good one. The sexton wouldn't even let Joshua pay for the use of the church. He said the people of Milford owed us!"

"Well, father didn't like it. And he doesn't like our little entertainments in old North School. He thinks our singin' is gettin' too close to worldly theatricals, I guess."

The boys were quiet for a while. Then Asa spoke soberly. "I hate to leave mother and Abby, but the sooner we leave the better it'll be."

Jesse made no objection when his sons told him they would go at once to Lynn. Polly, her face anxious, packed their sparse belongings and well-worn clothes in a leather trunk and watched them strap it to the back of a one-horse sleigh. Old Jesse had promised to drive them the fifty miles to Lynn, where the younger Jesse was in business. For fifteen hours, the boys and their father rode cramped together with not a word said about their leaving home. At Lynn casual farewells were exchanged, and John and Asa, aged nineteen and seventeen, were left alone.

Judson came up from Boston and Joshua drove down from Milford to help them get settled. When they made it clear that they were determined upon a musical career, young Jesse arranged for them to give a concert at Sagamore Hall. It was well attended, but John felt it showed that they needed more discipline and musical culture. Finally, it was agreed that they should go to Boston, where they could find employment and take music lessons. "If we're going to follow the business of giving concerts," remarked Asa, "we must have more practice."

Jesse turned his hardware and stove business in Lynn over to a manager and went to Boston with them. There the four

brothers—Judson, Jesse, John, and Asa—set up bachelor quarters on Purchase Street. Jesse worked as a typesetter on the *Boston Advertiser*, and John, after a period of sawing wood and peddling, hired himself to a grocer at eight dollars a month and board. Despite his temperance inclinations, he was obliged to sell rum and whiskey by the glass.

The foremost singing master in Boston was Dr. Lowell Mason, an energetic composer and teacher whose first collection of psalms was published in 1822. He had achieved fame, not only as president of the distinguished Handel and Haydn Society, but also as the organizer in 1833 of the Boston Academy of Music. Four years after his *Manual of Instruction* was printed in 1834, he was appointed to teach music in all the Boston schools. His songbooks were known to thousands throughout the United States during the forties and fifties.

Moving in the most select intellectual circles of Boston, Mason was much sought after. The Hutchinsons, when they timidly called to ask his advice regarding voice culture, found him courteous but abrupt and cool. It was plain to see that he considered them Yankee bumpkins with no background and less money who had come to Boston to impose upon his time. "We departed with no material satisfaction," remembered John.

The brothers were not to be put off, however, and called upon George James Webb, a member of the Handel and Haydn Society, who invited them to sing. Timid and conscious of their mended, though clean, clothes, the Hutchinsons selected a part piece. Webb swung around from the piano, looked at them with astonishment, and said gently, "I should be pleased to propose your names for membership in the society."

Judson and John accepted the invitation, but after attending one rehearsal, they decided their light voices would be lost in chorus singing and withdrew without mentioning the fact to Webb. They preferred to practice in an upstairs room over the store of their brother Andrew at the corner of Pearl and Purchase streets. Here night after night they practiced, smoothing

their voices, arranging parts, and essaying new compositions over and over again.

When they were not at work and were weary of music, they trudged the cobbled streets, alone and a little frightened. At the corner of Atlantic Avenue and Pearl Street, near old Griffin's Wharf, they saw the site of the Boston Tea Party, and their Baptist simplicity was shocked by the Ionic capitals of Saint Paul's Cathedral. "It's pretty plain inside, though, an' there's no stained glass," Asa conceded. "There's Dan'l Webster's pew." Judson, frequently wanting to be alone, spent hours loafing along the waterfront or resting on the Common where Governor Winthrop once grazed his cows.

John became more and more discontented. He disliked selling brandy to tipsy customers and he longed for a plate of Milford beans with applesauce and greens. Jesse worried over his business in Lynn, afraid that if he was gone too long his customers would drift away. All the brothers were pleased when Jesse suggested they pack up and return to Lynn. "I was light-hearted and encouraged," said John, "believing that I could once more enjoy freedom of conscience, dancing and shouting for joy that I was out of rum-selling."



Back in Lynn, Jesse took Asa with him into the hardware business, and Judson and John set up a small grocery on Union Street. An upstairs room furnished meager living quarters, but it seemed comfortable, and John was happy when he could cook his own food. After a few weeks he bought an old nag for seven dollars and a rickety wagon for seven more and established an express route. On Sundays all the brothers sang in the choir of the First Universalist Church, where Jesse was chorister. When they had leisure, they practiced their singing in a rented room at the corner of Union and Silsbee streets. There they stored their violins and cello and there they eagerly unwrapped books of instruction and song sheets sent from Boston.

John and Asa selected the songs for practice from *The Kingsley Social Choir*. This little book, together with *The Aeolian Lyre*, was the nucleus of their musical library. From time to time they added song sheets purchased from Oliver Ditson's musical publishing house in Boston. When John learned that a new song, *The Maniac*, had just been published, he sat down to count the silver in a lean pocketbook. A dollar, he thought, was a tarnation lot of money for a single song, but it was said to be a good one. Saying nothing to his brothers, he ordered a copy from Ditson with his last dollar. It arrived by express with twelve and a half cents charges. John groaned, but from the first glimpse of the cover illustration—a shackled lunatic—the song delighted him.

"I know about the author," he told Judson. "Henry Russell's an Englishman an' was organist of a Presbyterian church in New York. In Rochester, I think it was."

"This'll be a smart hit," said Asa, humming snatches of the woeful melody. "It's about a feller who claims he isn't mad. Let's try it now. You sing it, John, an' we'll accompany you."

John disheveled his hair, his face took on a vacant look, and his eyes seemed to bulge from their sockets.

Hush! 'tis the night watch, he guards my lonely cell;
Hush! 'tis the night watch, he guards my lonely cell;
'Tis the night watch,

He comes, he comes this way,

His glimmering lamp I see—

Softly!—he comes!

Hush! Hush! Hush!

The tempestuous music of the two violins and the violoncello swelled and softened. John half turned to implore an imaginary keeper.

No, by heaven, I am not mad!

Oh, release me! Oh, release me!

No, by heaven, I am not mad.

I loved her sincerely,

I loved her too dearly,
In sorrow and pain.
Oh, this poor heart is broken.

Judson's plaintive violin swelled to a scream, and John concluded:

Hush! I hear the music in the hall—
I see her dancing—she heeds me not,—
No, by heaven, I am not mad!

"You never spent a dollar better," exclaimed Jesse. "That's got to be one of our regulars. If Russell writes any more, we'll get them too. I'm going to write Ditson now."

A few days later, Jesse offered another suggestion. For some time he had thought that if the brothers actually intended to make music a serious business, they should have some song peculiarly their own which would distinguish them from other singers. "We want a song of ourselves—a sort of family song—a song of the Hutchinsons," he told his brothers. "I've thought about it at home an' when we were down in Boston, an' I've some verses. What do you think of the first one?"

Judson heard it through and grunted. It never was easy to judge his reactions. One moment he was gay and bright as sunlight and the next was darker than thunderheads over the Green Mountains. He was unpredictable like his father. Ignoring his brother's moroseness, Jesse repeated the verse.

We have come from the mountains,
We've come down from the mountains,
Ho, we've come from the mountains
Of the old Granite State.

John and Asa thought it fair enough, and Jesse, encouraged, read from a tattered scrap his rough version of the next stanza.

We have left our aged parents,
We have left our aged parents,
We have left our aged parents,
In the old Granite State.

"It seems to me, Jess, that you ought to put in somethin' 'bout the rest of the family." John penciled for a minute. "Somethin' like this. 'We're the tribe of Jesse'—let's see now—'we're the tribe of Jesse, we're the tribe of Jesse . . .'"

"And our several names we'll sing," concluded Asa.

"That's another verse right there, I do believe," exclaimed Jesse. "Here, write it out in stanza form, an' we'll rhyme our names at the end."

We're the tribe of Jesse,
We're the tribe of Jesse,
We're the tribe of Jesse,
And our several names we'll sing.

David, Noah, Andrew, Zephy, Caleb, Joshua, Jesse, Benny,
Judson, Rhoda, John and Asa and Abby are our names;
We're the sons of Mary, of the tribe of Jesse,
And we now address you in our native mountain song.

Working hard, they completed the first draft in time for Jesse to take the manuscript with him when the brothers visited their parents. There, in the old family home overlooking the Souhegan, Jesse sang *The Old Granite State* for the first time. He had set the words to the music of an old revival hymn which the family had sung for years and which seemed most appropriate for the words he had written. *Old Church Yard*, a Second Advent tune, had a simple rhythmic pattern; it began slowly and gradually increased in intensity. Above all, it was the kind of tune to which one could easily fit words.

When Jesse sang his song for his father and mother, he little dreamed how popular it was destined to become or how much it would contribute to the Hutchinsons' success. The family song was to give them an identity they could not so easily have achieved otherwise.



It was difficult for them to get started, though, even after Jesse suggested the value of *The Old Granite State*. Their first concert was given in East Wilton, in a bare room lighted only

by three candles resting on a board laid across barrels. That night's work netted them six and a half cents. And the results weren't much better the next time, when they all ate pickles in the belief they were good for the voice and almost strangled as a result.

John, wearied of his toilsome hours in the grocery store and of his express trips through the Lynn countryside, selling gingerbread and pies, drinks of mead, and garish prints, urged more and more the necessity for the brothers' going on an extended tour.

To this Jesse and Asa always agreed, but Judson hung back. At times his moroseness threatened to undo long months of planning. John worried and spoke privately of his brother's "hallucinations." Yet there were long weeks when Judson was bright, eager, and perhaps more adventuresome than any of the others. One thing was certain. Judson was absolutely indispensable to the musical career of the Hutchinsons.

So one evening in their Lynn practice rooms, when John caught Judson in a rare humor, he broached the subject again. "What do you think, Judson, of us giving up the grocery business and making a concert tour of near-by towns? Perhaps, if everything went well, we could take in a few places in Vermont."

To the brothers' surprise, Judson agreed. "That's all right, but what are we goin' to call ourselves?"

"What do you mean?"

"I mean we ought to have a name just like Jess said we ought to have a song—one that'd mean us an' nobody else."

"'The Tribe of Jesse' is good enough for me," said Asa.

"That's flat," answered Judson bluntly. "We want somethin' with color, like the Tyrolese Rainers that John heard in Lynn."

"Well, even songbooks have pretty names," admitted John. "Take this *Aeolian Lyre*, for instance."

"That hits it!" exclaimed Judson. "Why not call ourselves the Aeolian Vocalists?"

The name was adopted and within a few days enthusiastic

plans were drawn up for the company to initiate their musical career. Judson and John were only too glad to rid themselves of the grocery. It was agreed, if all went well, to start as soon as possible, and to persuade Abby to accompany them. Although not yet twelve years old, she had a clear, sweet voice and once had sung in a local concert, dressed in colorful Swiss costume.

By February 1841 the Aeolian Vocalists were hard at work perfecting their solos and their quartet. Judson's naturally high voice was a pure tenor; John's a deep baritone, although he sang falsetto easily; and Asa's a deep bass. Abby's contralto blended beautifully. In quartets Abby sang first tenor, Judson second tenor, John first bass, and Asa second bass, but so adept did they become in interchanging parts as they sang that it was almost impossible to distinguish the several voices.

To add novelty, John bought a Prince melodeon, thinking it would be a welcome addition to the violins and cello. His brothers protested this musical "washing machine," which, unlike anything they had ever seen, had a keyboard of regular piano pattern and rested on legs, instead of on the lap as was the case with older styles. The bellows worked like an accordion, said John, adding that the keys were pressed "with a 'Rock me to Sleep, Mother' motion." Abby was sure she could never sing to the accompaniment of this weird machine. She hated to give up her beloved guitar. In time, however, the entire family preferred it to stringed instruments, and a melodeon accompanied them everywhere.

Finally, after weeks of intensive practice, a program was arranged. It included several new verses of the family song, Russell's *The Maniac*, and two songs sung at the feeble Thanksgiving concert in the Milford Baptist Church: *Ava Sanctissima* and the glee, *Have You Seen My Flora Pass This Way?* Asa, as program-maker, added *Life Let Us Cherish*, a romantic, sentimental song; *Barbara Allen*, time-honored tragedy of love; and *Perry's Victory*, a patriotic piece. To John was given, as a solo, a comic love song.

Let *Glue-pot* all my actions guide,
Let Rosee *stick* to me:
And if she but proves true to love,
I'll *stick* to her like *flea*.

But if she should prove false or foul—
Disdainful, proud, or fickle;
I'll cut her like a *short-cake* off,
And put my heart in *pickle*.

For a concluding number, the Aeolians selected the ever-popular *Yankee Doodle Was a Gentleman*.

Yankee Doodle was a gentleman,
Of the rare true Yankee breed, sir,
In a pumpkin garden he was found,
Among the scattered seeds, sir;
His father's name was Jonny Bull,
His mother's—Suky Cudle—
And they used to sing the boy to sleep,
By singing Yankee Doodle.

When news of the projected concert tour reached Milford, events moved with devastating swiftness. Old Jesse objected to the whole idea. He did not want his children to become mere performers and in a cramped hand penned them a note asking them to come home and help work the farm. He promised to deed the family homestead to the six youngest children if only they would give up thoughts of a stage career, pledge themselves to help their mother, and settle down as farmers. He even asked them not to marry.

The boys, just ready to attempt a career they had planned for years, were bitterly disappointed. They spent hours reaching a decision. "Father wants us home now," said John, "just when we shouldn't go. A year ago, when we were on the farm, he as much as said he didn't want us. We left at his bidding, not because we wanted to."

He fumbled blindly with a stack of song sheets, but behind

their gay lithographed covers, as if viewed from the wrong end of a telescope, he saw only the face of his mother.

"It'll be hard on her if we don't go back."

On this fact the big plans and pleasant dreams, so long and laboriously in the making, broke like a child's soap bubble. The little practice hall was vacated, the grocery closed its doors, and John's feeble express route passed into memory. Only Jesse kept his business, for he felt that with a family of his own to take care of he could ill afford to relinquish a profitable trade in hardware and shoes.



Back in Milford, near the old quarry where they had played and sung as children, their parents welcomed the boys with generous, open arms. There was plenty of work to do, and John, Asa, and Judson labored diligently with Brother David as farmers and mechanics. Outbuildings, long in need of repair, were put in condition; the old hop-house, abandoned since Father Jesse joined the temperance cause, was moved away; and starved fields were spread with fertilizer.

All through the long, cold winter and the early spring of 1842, the work went on. The Aeolian Vocalists, no longer caring whether white gloves were an affectation on a concert platform, were only common dirt farmers, striving to earn a livelihood from the parsimonious New Hampshire soil. Their life, once the restrictions were accepted, ran smoothly and harmoniously. "It was a pleasure," remembered John kindly, "to have our father relieved from the burden of his great cares. That year he celebrated his wedding anniversary simply by giving mother an outing."

Yet the promise of singing always stood between the boys and their chores. Torn, in spite of their decision and their pledges to old Jesse and Polly, between their desire to help on the farm and their passionate interest in music, they discussed



THE AEOLIANS



JUDSON

ASA

ABBY AND JOHN



THE HUTCHINSON FAMILY, FROM THE LITHOGRAPH BY G. & W. ENDICOTT, 1843

their problem again and again. One day they would be quite convinced that the proper thing was to stay at home, and the next they would be equally sure that it would be best to leave on concert tour. Tempers frayed as they tried once more to decide.

The decision was further complicated by three pink-cheeked young ladies who had come from Lyndeboro and Bedford to attend the Milford Female Academy. Judson, John, and Asa saw them, demure but exceedingly attractive, in church, and heard them sing.

"Our hearts and souls were kindled with a flame of sacred love," wrote John. "We worshipped at these shrines, and the associations ripened into harmony."

Father Jesse watched the romance with a jaundiced eye. Marriage would wreck his chances of keeping his sons on the farm. Love sometimes compels prompt action, whereas a musical tour might grow stale. Between romance and music, Jesse favored the latter as the lesser evil.

The boys made their decision when the summer of 1842 lay gentle over the Souhegan. They determined to go on tour even at the risk of incurring their father's displeasure. They might have decided otherwise had the young ladies accepted their ardent proposals of marriage, but the coy, though cool, girls indicated they would rather wait and see how successful the concert trip would be.

So the boys got ready to set out. Their program was ready, planned to the last detail months before while they were in Lynn. They persuaded Abby to accompany them, and Judson hurried down to Boston to spend seventy-five dollars for a handsome carryall with leather side curtains, high wheels, a curving dashboard, and a trunk rack behind. Brother Benjamin loaned them a white mare to be hitched with Old John, the horse that had hauled John's grocery and express wagon in Lynn.

Packing was simplicity itself. A bag of clothing was put in the carryall, uncased violins were hung inside, the bass viol was

strapped on the top, and a little hair trunk, containing Abby's meager wardrobe, was lashed on the rack. As they drove away from the homestead perched on a knoll above the Souhegan, they passed their brother David, now thirty-nine, sweating in the fields. He came to the fence and shouted, "Remember, boys, noise is not music!"

Fiddlin' Round the Circuit

THE road from Milford to New Boston was a winding, dusty ribbon of adventure. Along the route farmers heard song long before the crowded carry-all came into sight, for the Hutchinsons, full of energy suppressed at home, sang joyously in celebration of their freedom. This was the beginning of life for them, the first step of a career they had planned for years, and the start of a tour which they hoped would sweep them into the breathless realms of popular acclaim. They were as confident as youth itself.

Judson flourished his whip over the straining team, for the first few miles were upgrade. Pointing over the hills to the left, he turned to Abby. "Hear Purgatory Falls? Did you ever hear Grandfather Leavitt tell that ol' story about the devil livin' there?"

"I did," said Asa. "He lived there alone, and et the rocks and dived in an' out the pothole as easy as kids in the Souhegan. Then one day he sent out invitations the country round fer a baked-bean supper with all the fixin's. Folks didn't rightly know whether to go er not, but no Yankee kin miss beans. They come from as far as Mount Vernon—the wimmen too, just to see if the devil could bake beans better'n them.

"Well, the Old Man was cookin' beans plumb in the pothole an' he told the guests to step right up, they'd be ready in a jiffy." Asa always enjoyed a tall yarn, especially if he told it himself. "Well, sir, when the devil started dishin' beans out, what do you think happened? His foot slipped clean down to the ankle in hot fire-rock, and he let out sich a roar and scream that the townsfolk hit fer home. That's all that saved them, fer he'd schemed to catch 'em sure."

"And that's why when the rock cooled it left a big foot-print," finished Abby.

"That's right, an' you kin see the print plain as day and hear the devil moanin' an' groanin' an' threshin' in the falls, trying to get his foot cooled off."



After a short rest stop at New Boston, the troupe drove on to Weare, a small village in the midst of fertile land and low mountains and high hills, where they gave their first formal program in the church. Local prejudice at first frowned upon using the meetinghouse for secular singing, but after considerable bickering, during which one sturdy individual declared loudly that the Hutchinsons were going to sing even if he had to break open the door, opposition dwindled.

This concert convinced the brothers that an extended tour was feasible. Abby, who always was consulted, young as she was, agreed, and a route was then laid out which would carry them, in a rough semicircle, from Concord, through Franklin and Lebanon, to Woodstock and Rutland in the Green Mountain State. Vermont always had intrigued John, and it was he who suggested extending the tour to include its eastern cities on the banks of the Ottauquechee and in the valley of Otter Creek. "We'll go slowly enough," he said, "so that we can sing in the smaller villages as well as the bigger communities."

Day after day the carryall, its curtains drawn to protect Abby from the summer sun, moved slowly along the roads, passed sparkling brooks whose tantalizing coolness only intensified the carriage heat, and rumbled over covered bridges which for a brief moment gave protection from the dusty July heat. Sometimes Judson pulled the team to a stop in a grove of shade trees, and John, or perhaps Asa, would knock on a farmhouse door to ask if he might buy food. Jugs of cold milk, fresh from the chilling waters of the springhouse, bread with the oven's glow still on it, and great slabs of yellow and white

cheese were bought for as little as twenty-five cents. Always the Hutchinsons added a song or two in payment, for they were "all well and in mirth most of the time." After their picnic lunch was over, they would be off again, determined to reach the next town before curtain time.

The long hours of travel would have been even more monotonous had it not been for an almost endless string of stories from John and Asa and for song. Most of their practice took place in the carryall, so that farmers looked up amazed at bursts of gay music. At times when Abby was worn and weary, she would start a rollicking tune that never was a part of a regular Hutchinson program. They divided their repertoire into "work" songs and "fun" songs. *The Racoon Hunt* was a fun tune. Abby always began in her contralto.

As I walked out by light de moon,
So sweetly singing dis ole tune,
O dere I spi'd a big racoon
A settin' on a rail!

Judson picked up the next stanza in his easy tenor.

Says I, Mr. Coon, how do you do?
Says he, Mr. Jaw Bone, how are you,
I do not fear the bug-gar-boo
A settin' on a rail,
A settin' on a rail, a settin' on a rail,
I do not fear the bug-gar-boo
A settin' on a rail!

John's baritone and Asa's deep bass harmonized another episode.

Oh! den says I to Mr. Coon,
I'll hab your skin dis afternoon,
And neber more by light de moon,
Will you set upon de rail,
Will you set upon a rail! will you set upon de rail!
And neber more by light de moon,
Will you sit upon de rail!

"Now then, together," called Abby, and all four voices blended to complete the tragedy of the coon skinned by a rail and his hide spread upon the ground for "de coons and possums all around, to bid dis coon good-by."

Frequently, when they were sung out, the Hutchinsons talked of home, or of program arrangements, admission prices, and, naturally enough, net profits. The Hutchinsons were charging only twenty-five cents for a concert ticket, and profits, of course, were slim during this first tour in the carryall.

Strive as they would, the family could not keep expenses down. At Hooksett, a little village astride a cataract of the Merrimack River, where, according to the little diary and account book that Asa kept throughout the tour, "our lodgings, private room, and our washing apparatus was not the best," a landlord charged them three dollars. For rent of the concert hall and for lighting, Asa paid a dollar and twenty-five cents. Another twenty-five cents went as a service fee. The gross receipts from the concert amounted to twelve dollars, leaving seven dollars and fifty cents net profit, which had to be divided among four persons.

John complained that there were always extra expenses. Oats for the team and the shoeing ran into a sizable figure as the trip progressed; road tolls cut into slender reserves; a new dress for Abby cost two dollars and seventy-five cents; and a shaving brush, toothbrush, and powder totaled twenty cents. "I declare," said Abby, "I don't know where the money goes." Judson looked hard at her new gown but wisely said nothing.



As the days passed, the tour became a test of endurance which tried both the patience and the body. Heat, "hot enough to scorch whiskers," frayed tempers, and the endless cloppity-clopping of the horses' hoofs rang like a devil's refrain until even placid John turned waspish. Abby complained that the jolting of the carriage gave her a pain in the side, and Judson

growled that he was tired of having to get out and read blurred road signs just because he was the tallest. All sighed with relief when they sighted the Connecticut River and Moose Mountain, for they knew that Hanover, home of Dartmouth College, was only a short drive ahead.

"Go directly to the Dartmouth Hotel," John commanded. "We'll take rooms first and talk about our concert after resting."

Scarcely had they settled into their rooms when a knock sounded on the door. Asa turned the knob to admit an old friend, a resident of Hanover. Cyrus L. Blanchard encouraged the quartet to remain for more than one day and promised he would stir up interest in several concerts. When he left he carried complimentary tickets to pass out among undergraduate musicians. The Hutchinsons supped at the inn and then wandered through the campus before bed. Blanchard had told them frankly, even while encouraging them, that times were bad and that the freshman class of '42 would be smaller than usual. The students, however, seemed alert and bright to Judson, and he returned to the hotel assured of a peaceful night's rest and a prosperous concert series.

No sooner had he got into bed than he bolted straight up. "In heaven's name," he called, "what's that?"

John laughed. "It's the students a-hornin'," he said. "Blanchard warned me this evening. He said they've done it for twenty years or more. They send clear to Boston for fish-horns an' blow 'em whenever they've a mind to. Got so bad the professors tried to stop it a few years back, but they couldn't do it. Reckon you'll just have to stand it, Jud."

The next evening the troupe gave its first concert in Dartmouth Hall, a large and imposing wooden structure that was a beautiful example of colonial architecture, graceful in its lines and perfect in proportion. Judson was disappointed when only twenty-eight paid admissions were counted, but Asa, writing in his diary after the performance, said: "If ever an audience was pleased it was this audience. All Gentlemen and Ladies. What

Cheering." The next day, a hot July 16, the troupe sang for the second time, and the crowd was almost doubled.

On Sunday, always a day of leisure, they drove over to Enfield to see the Shaker settlement. "Of all nonsense," said Asa, "this seems to be the greatest." John did not agree, for he learned in Hanover that the Shakers raised medicinal herbs such as his mother grew in her kitchen herb garden. As a boy he had drunk sage tea and had smelled the delicious odors that came steaming up from infusions of lemon mint, peppermint, and apple mint. Walking through the Shaker gardens, he noticed the basil and marjoram, the horseradish and coriander, the larkspur and white snakeroot, and the wild lettuce and true bittersweet. In an immaculate workroom, women in neat dresses, their necks and shoulders covered with snow-white kerchiefs, pulverized and packed and labeled the botanic drugs.

John picked up a flask marked *Lobelia inflata*. This was the pukeweed, relied upon by earliest New England settlers to cleanse the stomach. Close by lay a mound of roots from which once grew the tall stem and graceful spike of flowers of the blazing star or drooping starwort. Pulverized, the roots would be administered in warm water to a woman after childbirth. Before leaving, John bought a package of lobelia, and he took Abby a bouquet of invigorating mints.

The next morning, bright and early, Judson brought the carryall to the front door of the hotel. Abby came out, followed shortly by John, who was carrying her small trunk. Long minutes later Asa swung through the door, his lips white with anger. Waiting until they were well on the way to Windsor, Asa told his brothers and Abby that the landlord had charged them nineteen dollars for their rooms. This was more than they had realized from the two Hanover concerts, and the troupe were discouraged by this unexpected reverse.

"Some innkeepers are like that, I reckon." John was trying to soften the blow. "We'll make it up soon enough. We're goin' over to Vermont now, an' I feel our luck will change."

Windsor was their next stop, where twenty-seven persons turned out to hear the usual program, which by now had been memorized. Then came Woodstock, a neat village on the banks of the Ottawaquchee.

Judson drove directly to Samuel Whitney's inn, dropped the reins limply over the dashboard, and dragged himself painfully into bed. He complained of a headache, John was nursing a cold, and Abby was annoyed by the pain in her side which had persisted for more than two weeks. Only the prospect of a full house for the Woodstock concert kept them from being completely miserable.

By early evening, though, Judson was worse. Asa, scared and miserable, wrote in shaking letters of fear, "O! I hope Judson is getting better. He is to good to be so afflicted."

Then John remembered the packet of lobelia purchased from the Shakers and went rummaging in his scarred valise. As he searched, his mind turned to the old homestead and the faith his parents put in Dr. Samuel Thomson's system of botanic remedies. He saw his mother, when Sara Rhoda was ill, reach down from the kitchen shelf, close by the almanac, a well-worn copy of Dr. Benjamin Colby's *Guide to Health*. It had been printed in Milford, he recalled, and had been given her by Grandfather Leavitt. He could see her now, holding the volume in her left hand, close to troubled eyes, while she compounded and stirred healing "yarbs" with her right. How many times the children had gagged when the lobelia went down and strained as it came up.

Abby tiptoed in with a jug of steaming water. "Don't you think we ought to have a 'regular' doctor see him?"

"A 'regular'!" John reached for the jug and began preparing an infusion. "Don't you know what a 'regular' would do? He'd bleed him with leech or lancet. Then he'd fill him full of mercury, bleed him more and purge him, and he'd be weak as a cat, and we'd be here for a week or more."

Judson forced the hot liquid down an unwilling throat and lay back exhausted. Within short minutes he vomited. Abby

covered him with heavy quilts even though the day was warm, but the desired perspiration did not come.

John, although he would not admit it, was as worried as Asa and Abby. He wished he could remember more details of Thomsonian treatment, a system of domestic medicine begun some fifty years earlier by an uneducated New Hampshire farmer who distrusted bloodletting and mercurial preparations and placed his faith in herbs and steam baths. John picked up his hat and went out on the street to find a Thomsonian physician, for the system had swept like wildfire through the nation. A steam doctor had offices down the street a piece, he was told.

"You've done just right to give him lobelia," said the doctor, after examining Judson. "He's got the fever, but we'll have him on his feet by this time tomorrow." Reaching into his satchel, he brought out two paper twists. "Here's Thomson's No. 2. It's cayenne and will raise internal heat and produce perspiration. Give him half a teaspoonful in hot water every fifteen minutes until he sweats freely. And here's No. 4, a mixture of barberry and poplar bark that will correct the bile in him and restore digestion. You can give him a wineglassful, in hot water, every two hours. He'll be all right tomorrow. The charge for medicine is eighteen cents."

Zealously following the physician's orders, John, Abby, and Asa took turns in giving the Thomsonian remedies. In the morning Judson's fever had disappeared, his eyes were clear, and, although weak, he demanded breakfast. By evening he was strong enough to sing. Asa was delighted. "Thomsonianism," he confided happily to his diary, "is the helpmeet of our whole family and ought to be that of the whole Human Family. May its cause flourish. Let everyone partake of its healing benefits."



One hundred and fifty persons attended the concert in Woodstock, but despite this success John noticed that tempers were brittle, a fact he laid to weeks of rehearsal in unseasonable

heat, almost constant traveling, and poor tavern food. Then, too, financial worries persistently plagued the party. But everyone seemed in good health and fair spirits when Judson turned the team westward toward the rising Green Mountains. They traveled a deep, narrow valley floor with high ranges on the right and left and began the long climb, stopping frequently to let the horses rest, until Judson reined up at Sherburne Pass. There Abby unwrapped a lunch of green cheese and bread.

Asa carried a sandwich to a high rock from which he got a sweeping view of the wild, rocky countryside. Within a few minutes Judson followed. John, leaning against the carryall, saw Judson speak to Asa. Almost instantly the two were fighting, the hard body blows sounding clear in the rarified air. Abby, first to collect herself, ran forward, stopped to listen, and then swung with tight little fists, first on Judson and then on Asa. When John shouldered the panting trio apart, Asa's coat was ripped, Judson, with shaking fingers, was toying with a wristband torn from his shirt, and Abby, in tears, was rubbing numbed fingers.

"What, in God's name, is this?" shouted John, as near to profanity as he ever permitted himself to get. "Have you all gone crazy?"

"Jud had no right to say it," said Asa sullenly. "He hit me first."

"I saw that, but what's the matter with you?"

"That's for Jud to say."

Judson, ripping his wristband to bits, walked away, and John knew there was no use following. He knew too that Asa and his sister would keep silent. There was no use prying. The incident was closed.

John thought hard. "We'll ride into Rutland singing."

They looked at him in astonishment. This was a new John, this stern, disciplining individual who commanded rather than suggested. For some reason, they felt better for the change. They had a leader now who would take responsibility and demand obedience. It was what they needed.

"What will it be, John?"

"Anything you want," he answered, for he knew how far to go.

Abby dried her eyes, and then her voice, plaintive, but sweet and clear as always, began.

I have fruit, I have flow'rs, that were gathered in the bow'rs,
Amid the blooming hills, so high, so high;
I have fruit, I have flow'rs, the daughters of the show'rs,
Of the dews and the rills—will you buy?

One song led to another, and when they pulled up in front of the Franklin House in Rutland, the chorus of *The Hunters of Kentucky* brought a crowd to surround the carryall and cry for more. Orcutt, the landlord, waddled out to smile and smirk, assuring them the inn was theirs, and hoping they would be comfortable. He set a good table, he added. John nodded. "We'll be here over the weekend," he said. "Tonight we'll sing at the courthouse. You may tell your guests."

A small crowd, noisy and sacrilegious, attended the performance. Counting the gate receipts was simplicity itself. John raked silver into neat piles, and his reckoning came to five dollars. There was no denying that in Vermont, as in New Hampshire, the trip was wavering perilously on the brink of financial disaster. He sighed. Perhaps it would have been better, after all, if they had stayed on the Milford farm. They had failed in Boston and in Lynn, and now they were unsuccessful on tour. True, people liked their singing, but not enough of them were willing to pay for an evening of song.

Judson was feeling as miserable as John, but for quite a different reason. His mind had been whirling ever since his illness in Woodstock, and at times his thoughts were so confused that he would have to shake his aching head to clear it of buzzing ideas. When he went up to his room, he opened Asa's diary. The blank page—so very white—stood clear. Dipping a pen, he wrote: "O! Dear what will become of us. These are times that try our soles. I fale like one that treads

alone some banquet hall Disirted whose lights are fled whose qurliss Dead and all but . . .”

The sentence wavered out, and he pressed shaking fingers to throbbing temples. “It’s time for bed,” said John gently, coming up behind him.

Much as John hated to face it, Judson’s peculiarities were growing more marked. From babyhood he had exhibited eccentric traits. He had cried aloud in the terror of his infant dreams, and as he grew older he had manifested recurring spells of what he himself called the “horrors.” Yet when he felt well, he was cheerful, enthusiastic, and lovable. He’s got more original ideas than any of the rest of us, mused John, and he’s a fine musician. Without him there could be no Aeolians.



In the morning Judson was in high spirits again, and the troupe set out on the twenty-five miles from Rutland to Whitehall, New York, located on Lake Champlain and at the head of the Great Western Canal. The road stretched through historic countryside that had witnessed the march of Johnny Burgoyne’s British redcoats and hired Hessians.

In Whitehall Judson borrowed a short history of the Saratoga region from a Temperance House clerk and carried it to his room, where he read aloud while Abby rested and John wrote home. Asa sat by a window, watching noisy canalmen harness horses to white-painted boats and start down deep-worn tow paths.

After a while John left to post his letter. In the lobby a lean, gray-haired gentleman, in baggy pantaloons and a rusty coat, shook his hand vigorously.

“You must be one of the Hutchinson singers,” he said. “Saw your pictures on the handbills, and I’m coming to the concert at the Presbyterian church tonight.”

“You’re not a New Yorker,” smiled John. “You sound more like a Green Mountain man.”

"I was born in Vermont more than sixty years ago, but I've lived here for thirty. I can remember the blizzard of '21 like 'twas yesterday. That was when the Blakes from over my way started across the Green Mountains in a sleigh. They got lost and the sleigh got stuck. Well, sir, Blake he got out and started a-foot for help. If the derved fool had stayed right there he'd been better off."

The old man was enjoying the story, and John sat down with him.

"He left his wife and baby alone in a snow coming from to death. Missus Blake took off with the baby through the every which way. He got lost and never did come back. Froze woods. Next morning they found Blake and her stiff as a poker, but the baby lived. That was a mighty big blow. Here, a feller by the name of Seba Smith wrote a poem 'bout it. I got it in my wallet—cut it from a paper a few years back."

John read it through. "Let me copy this, will you?" he asked.

"Sure, you can give it back at the concert tonight. It was a terrible storm."

Back in his room, John smoothed the clipping and read the lines to Asa and Abby. Judson pretended vast interest in his history, but finally he looked up, threw his book down, locked hands behind his head, and said, "Read it again, will you?" Again and again John read the verses while Judson mumbled, scratched on paper, and hummed tune fragments.

At last he was through. "Here's a new song. It goes like this:

The cold wind swept the mountain's height,
And pathless was the dreary wild,
And mid the cheerless hours of night
A mother wandered with her child.
As through the drifted snows she pressed,
The babe was sleeping on her breast,
The babe was sleeping on her breast.

And colder still the winds did blow,
And darker hours of night came on,
And deeper grew the drifts of snow—

Her limbs were chilled, her strength was gone
Oh, God! she cried in accents wild,
If I must perish, save my child,
If I must perish, save my child."

"We'll sing it ballad style, Jud!" cried Abby. "It's a good-luck omen to have a song like this."

The Snow Storm made its debut on the evening of July 25, 1842, but when it was published by Oliver Ditson a year later, Lyman Heath provided the music and George Hews arranged it for the pianoforte. The song sheet, illustrated with an engraving by Thayer and Company, announced the sentimental ballad "As Performed at the Concerts of the Hutchinson Family."

The excitement of a new song based upon local folklore stimulated not only the Hutchinsons but also the villagers of Whitehall, who turned out in force for a second performance. The Aeolians' capital now amounted to forty dollars, and they felt proud and rich. John ordered several hundred handbills to be struck off at seventy-five cents a hundred. These he sent to be posted in Sandy Hill, Saratoga Springs, Ballston, and Schenectady, for the troupe, flushed with success, planned to visit more towns in New York than they had originally intended.

Saratoga Springs, a famous spa since 1802, boasted a clientele which, according to a guidebook published in 1841, consisted of "gentlemen of the turf, connoisseurs of the odd trick, and the amateurs of poker." Whatever the nature of the guests, they greeted the Hutchinsons enthusiastically. The first concert, given in the Pavillion Fountain, brought in one hundred and fifty dollars, but a third of this went to the proprietor. Two other concerts were poorly attended.

This was only natural, for Saratoga's guests, some of them southern slaveowners, demanded something constantly new and different. Much of their life was given over to searching for unique entertainment, and a day was considered lost if their jaded appetites were not whetted by some novelty. The Hutchinsons could not expect a limited repertoire, sung in their natural, fresh country manner, to be more than a passing curi-

osity to the spa's sophisticates. This grated. Asa, undoubtedly feeling inferior in an atmosphere of wealth and gentility, wrote grimly: "Oh popcock and hoboken, the poor ye have always with you. I wish I was in Mass. I am of the opinion that I shall make a noise in the world yet."

John, outraged by the spa's "fashions, frivolity, frizzles, and frailties," delighted to quote sarcastic verse, purporting to describe manners at Saratoga.

"Pray, what do they do at the Springs?"

The question is easy to ask,
But to answer it fully, my dear,
Will be rather a difficult task.

In short, as it goes in this world,
They eat and they drink and they sleep;
They talk and they walk and they woo;
They sigh, they laugh and they weep;
They read, they ride and they dance
(With other unspeakable things);
They pray, they play and they pay,
And that's what they do at the Springs.

"We're only a side show here," grumbled Judson. "Let's move on."

Once more the carryall, loaded with boxes, violins, and Abby's trunk, took to the road. At Schenectady, where John had planned to stay several days, they met their first competition. A traveling family of bell ringers had posted the town, so John decided to push on to Bethlehem. However, before leaving, the Aeolians gave a brief, free concert, and passed the hat. Three dollars dropped in, but one of these was counterfeit! The Hutchinsons hurried away, convinced of the inherent evil of a community that would pay for a free performance with false money.



The troupe reached Albany half sick in body and despondent in spirit. Abby moaned with an earache and soon became fever-

ish. She was put to bed in a rooming house on Broad Street where lodgings cost twelve and a half cents a night. Outside torrential rains swept the streets and beat against the pedimented dormers of the old Philip Schuyler residence. Asa spread Abby's soaked garments to dry before a sullen fire, and then he and John opened pocketbooks.

"I had two pieces of change left," said John. "I gave twenty-five cents to you for Thomsonian remedies for Abby, and I paid a shilling to that porter fellow who put the team away."

They looked at one another. They were always close to insolvency, but this was the first occasion they had had no money at all. Abby sobbed that she wanted to go home. Judson agreed.

"All right," said John. "I tell you what we'll do. We can sell the team and carryall for enough to take two of us home. We'll draw lots. The two short straws will be for Milford. The two longer ones will mean working in the country to make enough money to get home with."

"But that won't be right," remonstrated Asa. "Abby goes home no matter what. We'll put three straws in, and then draw the way John suggests."

John drew the short straw, so Judson and Asa began planning to find jobs as farm hands.

Then a heavy fist drummed on the door.

"You don't know me," said a strange gentleman, "but I have heard you perform. My name is Newland, Luke F. Newland. If you can arrange to remain in the city until Monday, I'll pay you one hundred dollars to sing for a group of my friends."

The Aeolians' spirits rose into a "realm of joy," and they readily agreed to sing in three of Albany's principal churches if Abby's health permitted. "Sister," Asa wrote in his diary, "how do you feel now, don't you feel any better? I hope you will get well soon, don't you?"

Abby did, and she recovered rapidly. The hope held out by Newland was good medicine.

True to his promise, Newland smoothed away most difficulties. Influential in Albany's business and social circles, he introduced the Hutchinsons to the city's prominent personages. One evening he requested the Aeolians to serenade a group of friends which included Thurlow Weed, editor of the *Evening Journal*. It was a wise move, for Weed, enchanted by the singing, not only invited the Hutchinsons into his home for refreshments, but also gave them favorable press notices.

After that crowds gathered whenever a concert was announced. Newland arranged concerts at the Presbyterian, Methodist, and Dutch Reformed churches, and pastors in their sermons paid glowing tribute to the tribe. At the Methodist church, the minister, a personal friend of Newland's, told an audience that the Aeolians "did not come from a theatre or any low place, but that they came from a respectable situation and had instilled in them the essence of religion." Their songs, he said, were of a noble and moral character.

Suddenly the Hutchinsons became the fad. On the evening of August 29, when they gave a concert at the Albany Female Academy, the hall was jammed with the city's elite and hundreds were turned away. The Aeolians had practiced long for this occasion and were introducing several new songs in a program of ballads, glees, humorous ditties, quartets, trios, and duets. Among these were two destined to become standard in the group's repertoire, *The Cot Where We Were Born* and *The Grave of Bonaparte*.

On a lone barren isle where the wild roaring billow
Assails the stern rock and the loud tempests rave,
And here lies still, while the dew drooping willow
Like fond weeping mourners leaned over the grave.
The lightnings may flash, and the loud thunders rattle,
He heeds not, he hears not, he's free from all pain;
He sleeps his last sleep, he has fought his last battle,
No sound can awake him to glory again.

Yet spirit immortal, the tomb cannot bind thee,
For like thine own eagle that soared to the sun

Thou springest from bondage, and leavest behind thee,
A name, which before thee no mortal had won.
Though nations may combat, and war's thunder rattle,
No more on the steed wilt thou sweep o'er the plain;
Thou sleepest thy last sleep, thou hast fought thy last battle,
No sound can awake thee to glory again.

Newland, pleased by the enthusiastic acclaim, invited the group to a soft drink parlor for refreshments after the concert. Ice cream was an almost unheard-of delicacy to the Hutchinsons, and Asa confided to his diary that he never had tasted any dish so good. Abby was delighted with the frozen, flavored mixture, and even Judson was impressed and cleaned his spoon with long, slow licks.

Pushing back his dish and touching his lips with a napkin, Newland offered suggestions that he had matured carefully in an orderly mind.

"I believe you are making a mistake by using the name 'Aeolian Vocalists.' It smacks too much of the theater and the professional entertainer. You'll never be successful on the legitimate stage anyway, but you do have a talent that should carry you far if you'll appeal to church groups and to reform organizations." He stopped a minute. "Then too, I think you're making too much of your violins. You ought to use stringed instruments only as accompaniment to your voices. You're in the habit of subordinating your real gift to the violins and the cello, and the result is you're just not getting as far as you might."

John thought it over. "You're right," he said finally. "Fiddlin' round the circuit hasn't paid off. I reckon we went at it the wrong way."

"There's one other thing," continued Newland, pleased by the troupe's reactions. "Your speech in public might be improved. I don't mean your New Hampshire accent—that's an asset. I refer to what the public might call 'farm talk.' You slur your words and drop endings. That's all right, and natural too, when you're alone, but it will not do when you're with

people and certainly never will do on the platform. I feel sure you will be able to remedy this."

He went on to point out grammatical errors, and the Hutchinsons promised to practice speech as zealously as they rehearsed songs. From that time their language improved, although in private conversation and in moments of excitement they were apt to slip back into youthful habits. Their host advanced a last suggestion.

"If you intend calling yourselves the Hutchinson Family, instead of the Aeolian Vocalists, I think you should purchase different clothes. The ones you wear now are sturdy and neat, but people like color."

The following morning, the Hutchinsons began putting their friend's suggestions to work. John ordered cards and posters printed with the new name of the troupe, and about the first of September the group officially changed its title to "The Hutchinson Family," which was maintained for more than half a century. Next the brothers, awed by their own boldness, purchased three elegant brown-and-white striped silk vests, close-fitting white trousers that strapped under boots, and long-tailed coats of royal blue. Tall beaver hats completed the costume. They had never spent so much money for clothes, and frugal Asa winced at the tailor's bill. "Nine dollars for vests!" he exclaimed. "Almost as much for hats and eighteen dollars for pantaloons."

Meanwhile Abby had been selecting yard goods, turning over bolts of ivory, deep blue, crimson, red, and yellow. Not one satisfied her until spread before her lay a handsome sea-green silk. The material alone came to six dollars, and the cost of dressmaking ran to a dollar and a half more, but the boys told her not to mind. The dress was to be a birthday present from them.

She had it made in bouffant style, pinched tightly at the waist, with full sleeves ruffled above the elbows and gathered closely at the wrists. "She made a grand appearance on the stage," said Judson, "before 400 or 500 people—the pride of

Albany." Newland was as pleased as anyone and noticed that Abby's gown was modeled after the pattern of Queen Victoria, a style much in vogue in the United States. He thought also that the audience was the "most refined, respectable, wealthy, musical, Christian, democratic, friendly, and influential" that ever had gathered for an Albany concert. All in all, he was delighted with his protégés. This feeling was mutual, for after the performance John wrote: "Friend L. F. Newland has proved to be a friend to us indeed."

Asa pondered hard on their sudden change of fortunes, entering his conclusions in the carefully kept diary. "A good moral character is better than Silver or Brass. To conduct properly, to use all with becoming respect, to deal justly with all and walk humbly is commendable to any one. A person or persons possessed of true principles of Christianity and a lover of good behaviour and a Practitioner of Morality towards Mankind will get through this world sometimes and perhaps with ease. But a man of honor and *Wealth* can go anywhere and be cordially received by all!"

Before the Hutchinsons left genial, openhanded Albany, Newland urged them to attempt concerts in Boston, saying that now was the time to determine once and for all whether a professional career was a probability. The troupe, always before willing to listen, were skeptical. John dreaded the thought of failure, and they left New York's capital without committing themselves. When they arrived in Pittsfield, Massachusetts, they talked the problem over with an uncle, Colonel Nathaniel Leavitt, who not only encouraged them but offered to act as their agent in Boston.

"I guess we might as well," John finally agreed after talking with his brothers and Abby. "Jud says we've spent a tarnation heap of money for silk rigs an' might as well put 'em to use. Asa thinks we've learned enough since July to get by, if we try hard. And Abby is willin', though she thinks we ought to practice more."

In Boston, Leavitt took rooms at the old Marlborough

House, a famous temperance hotel on Washington Street, where Lafayette had been entertained at a lavish dinner in 1824. John noticed a printed sign hanging in a conspicuous place in the quiet parlor. It read: "Family worship to be attended every morning and evening. No intoxicating liquors to be sold or used in the house. No money to be received at the office on the Sabbath nor will any company be received on that day except in cases of necessity. Cold and warm baths are provided here for the accommodations of boarders and a vegetable diet for those who prefer it. The best efforts are promised by the landlord to furnish the table with the products of free labor. Smoking of cigars not allowed on any part of the premises."

Leavitt made arrangements for the use of Melodeon Hall on the evening of September 13, and inserted notices in the *Mercantile Journal* and the *Evening Transcript*. A fair-sized crowd, more than the Hutchinsons expected, heard their first concert. Enthusiastic press notices tempted the family to sing again four days later, and a third performance was given on the twentieth.

John was both amused and annoyed by the professional and public response. Jacob Chickering, manufacturer of a six-octave pianoforte that was widely used throughout the country, encouraged the troupe, and Professor Benjamin F. Baker, vice-president of the Handel and Haydn Society, showed a friendly interest. Lowell Mason, of course, turned a cold shoulder, and a basso profundo of Boston's greatest chorus bluntly asked the Hutchinsons how they dared to come to town, take a large auditorium, and charge fifty cents admission for a program of country music.

Regardless of what classical musicians thought, newspapers saw in the troupe's program the beginnings of truly native song. As early as 1839 the New York *Mirror* had put the question squarely. "When shall we have in America a characteristic national music?" it asked. "The popular airs of every country are not only the product of the national feelings, but express

the national feelings, and hence every nation has or ought to have a music of its own, original and distinguished from that of all others. Whoever shall collect and embody the stray airs of America, and furnish them a medium, through which suitably to express themselves, will deserve well of his country."

Boston journalists believed they saw in the Hutchinsons the beginnings of a native music far superior to foreign compositions. "Come then," invited the *Evening Transcript*, "and see and hear and judge; and if 'Home Production' cannot compete with 'Foreign' it will then be time for some special act of 'Protection.' Listen to your own minstrels."

After each concert the singers eagerly scanned the press notices. On the evening of the nineteenth John shouted aloud. "Listen to what the *Transcript* says. 'The family all possess voices of excellent quality. One of the brothers—(by the by, they are fine looking young men)—has a tenor voice, one a barrytone, and the other a bass, while the sister—a charming lass of sweet sixteen with a pretty face, and a head that a phrenologist would pronounce excellent—has a contralto voice. With close study and constant practice, these vocalists are destined ere long, we think, to attain to a high rank as concert singers.'"

"Sixteen, indeed," said Abby. "I'm thirteen. The papers never get anything right."

Asa laughed. "What do you care? The *Transcript* says we've got voices, an' that's the important part. People won't care about your age or the bumps on your head. They want good music, an' we kin give it to 'em."

"Take it easy," said John. "It also says we need study and practice."

But the troupe's spirits would not be downed. Enthusiastically they discussed the future. They had already agreed to sing in New Hampshire and now they planned a tour which could carry them back into the musical circles of Boston and perhaps on to greater successes in New York.

But once again their high hopes and ambitions were to be

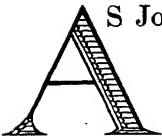
shattered on the rocks of parental interference. When they returned to the hotel next morning, after a visit to Ditson's to get some music and discuss the possibility of the publisher's printing some of their compositions, they found a note from Father Jesse waiting for them. Characteristically he came straight to the point. They had been gone for more than four months, and he wanted them to return home immediately; their place was on the land.

"To go to Milford now!" stormed John. "In the midst of our triumph! We can't do it!"

But the habit of filial obedience was too strong. They would go home as old Jesse demanded, but only for a short visit. They had no intention of remaining permanently.

The horses' breath curled in the chilly air when the carryall rolled into the family barn lot on November 25. Old Jesse's eyes gleamed with satisfaction, and Polly hugged her little Abby until both were in tears. "I never want you to leave home again," she warned her sons. They did not answer.

Like David's Harp

S John came down to breakfast the next morning he noticed the frosted window designs, etched by one of Milford's heaviest winters. He turned gratefully to the warmth of a range set near a yard-high woodbin piled with split oak and chestnut, and with splintered pine to kindle a fast-burning fire. Now the stove's six holes were cherry-hot, and it grumbled deep in its cast-iron belly as draughts from the cold floor swept up through a wide-lipped damper. John kicked the draft closed, and the monster's noise sank to a steady purr like that of Old Andy, a black tomcat napping on a faded hooked rug under the oven door.

Jesse stamped in from the barn, toed off his overshoes, hung cap and coat on a nail he had preempted, and plunged his face into a tin basin of cold water, gasping and blowing as if he were drowning in Purgatory Pond.

"This is a gripper, I calls it. The glass has been dropping since 4:00 when I was out to feed the horses." His voice came muffled from the folds of a heavy towel which rasped over a weather-lined face and seamed hands. Stepping across the kitchen, he took down the *American Almanac* and leafed through its pages, as he had every morning for years, hunting the sun tables. "Saturday, the twenty-sixth. Here 'tis. Sun won't be up till 7:04—more'n an hour and a half yet. Let's see—it don't set till 4:31. That ought to give us a good workin' day if we get started soon. What are we havin' fer breakfast?"

Polly turned, her face flushed from shifting awkward stove lids. "Fried corn meal with syrup from our own trees, and sausage. I'm warming a pot of leftover beans for you, Jess, and there's tea that Abby brung up from Boston."

She could have bitten her tongue as soon as she mentioned the tea leaves, for she knew her husband well. Now that the children were home, he wanted no mention of their tour. He had even backed the carryall under the hayloft where it was out of sight and could not remind him of an excursion undertaken, he now said, against his wishes.

For a time the breakfast talk was of local news: Winter apples were selling at a dollar a barrel; potatoes were twenty cents a bushel; Dr. Richard Williams, Milford physician, had died while the troupe were away; Elizabeth Taylor, eighty-eight years of age, who lived through the Revolution as a young lady, had gone to her reward. The snow was so deep, Polly said, that her frail old body was hauled to the burying ground on a sled.

"The Millerites are gettin' set fer the end of the world come New Year," chuckled Jesse, wiping syrup from his chin with a thick thumb. "They say nothin' is goin' to stop it this time. There's quite a mess of 'em in Milford, an' they're gettin' set. They'd do better to shovel their walks. I bet we'll still be usin' sleighs in April."

John saw the chance he had been waiting for. "You know, Father, before we got your letter to come home, we'd promised to sing at a few places around here." He didn't give Jesse a chance to reply. "And I wonder if we could use the family sleigh. This is one of the wildest winters for years, and we couldn't take Abby in the carryall, even if it would get through the drifts."

"You say you promised?"

"That's right. We even sent the posters out."

"Well, a promise is a promise, but you'd better file them runners some." Jesse stalked out, but came back to stick his head through the door. "Fill the woodbox fer your mother before you go workin' on the sleigh." He slammed the door.



Early the next morning the Hutchinsons, after putting the deep box sleigh in condition, broke trail over slippery, snow-

covered roads on the first lap of a short tour that would take them to Nashua, an attractive mill town located in an amphitheater of hills on the western bank of the Merrimack River, and on to Lowell and Boston. Wrapped in blankets and with hot bricks at Abby's feet, the musicians took more than seven hours to travel the twelve miles from Milford to Nashua. Despite the chilled air that came piercingly from the northwest, sweat dotted the team's flanks and flecked their lips from the strain of hauling the ponderous sleigh through drifted mounds. Nashua's streets were almost impassable. They stabled the team, warmed themselves at the inn, and rested until time for the evening concert in the town hall.

John rose earlier than usual the following dawn and looked upon a world white with new snow. A steady blow had drifted the night's fall into huge folds that obscured familiar landmarks and covered picket fences. Squinting through the narrow pane, he picked out a carriage bucking the drifts to reach the inn's door. As the white mare brought the vehicle to a skidding stop, John, in consternation, recognized the bundled figure in the driver's seat. It was his father.

Jesse, entering the tavern, appeared weaker than usual, but his countenance was set and his eyes as steely as when, years ago, he invited the boys into the woodshed for a dose of strap oil. "I want to see you all," he panted. "Get the horse around to the stable, rub him down, and give him a measure of oats."

Once he was warm again, Jesse came straight to the cause of his unexpected visit. "I've come to take Abby home with me. Your mother hasn't slept all night. She's almost crazy."

John's shoulders drooped in defeat. Here was additional resistance to months, even years, of planning. Polly usually had protected them, gave them slight signs of encouragement when Jesse was adamant, and showed by deeds rather than by words that she wanted them to escape the restrictive confines of the meager farm on the Souhegan. Now she too was pulling them back.

Abby's too young for all this bickering, thought John, but if we go home we'll lose all the good start we've made.

Old Jesse saw that the children were staring at John as if he might cut this knot. He also fixed his gaze on John. "Are you coming home with me?"

"Father, I don't see how we can and I don't see how we can't." John framed the words slowly. "We don't want to make mother unhappy. I know she misses Abby, but our whole future is at stake. Do you think she'd be satisfied if we promised to come home as soon as we finish this tour? That'd be in about three weeks, in time for Christmas, I'm sure."

"She might and she mightn't." The old man's fingers frayed his knitted scarf. "She'd have to be powerful certain you'd be back in three weeks. Would you be willin' to put it on paper?"

"I can promise that we'll be home in time for Christmas, Father." Abby's voice trembled, because she was none too sure whether she wanted to return or to follow the uncertain path lit by fickle stage lights. She caught up paper. "See," she said, dipping a pen, "I'll write every bit of it out so mother can read it, and I know the boys will sign."

The old man nodded. "All right," he said heavily.

One by one, in the chill of the bare tavern room, they stepped up to affix their names. First Abby's girlish hand, then Judson's emotional scrawl, then Asa's curlicues, and finally John's bold strokes that gave no indication he was signing with misgivings. The folded paper went into Jesse's waistcoat pocket, and he got up, shook each one gravely by the hand—he had not kissed them since they were cradle-size—and went slowly down the stairs and out to the barn to begin the trip home.

Within the tavern the children clustered at the coated window. Scratching away glistening ice particles for a peephole, they silently watched their father's horse flounder away through the drifts. Abby touched a square of muslin to damp eyes. She loved her mother intensely, but for years she had felt ill at ease and insecure at home. This feeling, she sensed, was shared by her brothers.

John's voice snapped her reverie. He was speaking in the dry, matter-of-fact tone he always used when moved. "Be you hungry? We better get down to breakfast before everything is cleaned up."

By noon, when the Hutchinsons started for Lowell, the snow had crusted over, so that the sleigh's runners slid effortlessly over the white highway. Bundled in their greatcoats, with knitted mufflers protecting their throats and sharp-peaked caps pulled over their eyes, the quartet huddled together. Despondency blanketed them like the deep, quiet snow that covered field and road.

John, beating one mittened hand against the other to coax warmth to numbed fingers, finally broke the silence.

"'Pears to me there hain't been so much tarnation cold an' ice since the year Grandpa Leavitt fatched in his winter's supply of geese." He glanced slantwise to see if his companions would rise to the bait.

"I never heard about that." Judson was curious.

"The old man could tell to a day when the wild geese would come a-honkin' over the Souhegan. But that November a storm came early, a foot of soft snow and then rain, the kind that freezes jest as soon as it touches. Why, every twig was as big as your wrist with ice an' more was formin' all the time. Grandfather had his ear cocked fer geese, 'cause he knowed they was about due. Well, twarn't long before he heard 'em—a big flock that didn't seem to be goin' over. Their voices hung in the air right over the granite pit behind the barn a ways.

"After they'd been honkin' fer a spell, Grandpa couldn't stand it no longer. He hiked out of th' house without even botherin' to take his gun. When he got to the top of the hill he saw a most 'strodinary sight. There was a good-sized flock, ninety-seven to be exact, that had got so iced up they'd had to settle on top of the hill.

"Ice'd formed on their feathers till they was so weighted down they couldn't fly no more, and they was gettin' more iced up every minute. The old man jest stood and gawked. He

thought 'bout goin' back fer his gun, but he was a-feared somebody else would beat him to the flock. He calculated he'd drive 'em home. They was terrible iced up, but their legs was free.

"Well, you know, once he got 'em started down the hill, the weight of ice on 'em turned 'em right over and over, and as they rolled, they took up more an' more of that wet snow till by the time they came slap up against the side of the barn every single goose was sealed up plumb in the middle of a hard, round snowball. Grandpa jest piled 'em up, an' any time the family wanted roast goose they went out and split open a snowball. He was the only feller in the valley that ever stored geese that way."

Laughter at this tall tale released pent-up emotions and the troupe were in good spirits when they reached Lowell, a thriving cotton manufacturing center on the Merrimack River and the Pawtucket Canal. They looked eagerly at the buildings of the Merrimack Manufacturing Company, where many New Hampshire girls tended the spindles, slept in corporation lodgings, ate in company dining rooms, and shopped in company stores.

Asa and Abby could scarcely wait to visit the busy textile plants. Long workrooms, where rosy-cheeked spinners tended machines and frames, looked pleasant and inviting. One window, Abby noticed, was filled with colorful geraniums, and in a little nook were pasted bits of verse clipped from newspapers and from the *Operatives' Magazine* and the *Lowell Offering*, both edited by the workers. One of the girls said she called herself Lucy Larcom and shyly admitted she had composed a few of the verses. Abby thought nothing of it at the time, but a few years later Lucy Larcom's *Hannah Binding Shoes* was one of her favorite concert songs. When it was published in 1859 by Oliver Ditson, the title was changed to *Hannah's At the Window Binding Shoes* and the author's name was misspelled, but the verses faithfully followed the original.

Poor lone Hannah,
Sitting at the window, binding shoes:

Faded, wrinkled,
Sitting, stitching, in a mournful muse.
Bright-eyed beauty once was she,
When the bloom was on the tree:
Spring and winter,
Hannah's at the window, binding shoes.

Not a neighbor,
Passing nod or answer will refuse,
To her whisper,
"Is there from the fishers any news?"
Oh, her heart's adrift with one
On an endless voyage gone!
Night and morning,
Hannah's at the window, binding shoes.

A few of the millworkers attended the Hutchinson concert that evening, although the heavy weather kept many at home. John was attracted by a charming girl whose affable smile and bright eyes caught his fancy. He had never seen such a winsome creature. After the last song he hurried to the foyer and with bold shyness introduced himself. The young lady lowered her lashes, but she told him her name was Fanny B. Patch and that she had lived in Lowell all her life. When John requested permission to call, she agreed.

The family watched the courtship with interest. Twenty-year-old Fanny, Judson admitted, would make a good wife for any man. Even Abby, with a sister's skeptical eye, approved and told John privately it was a good thing he had forgotten the girl at the Milford Female Academy. When the troupe left for Boston, John promised he would return as soon as possible, and Fanny did not discourage him.



The stay in Boston was much shorter than they had expected. When John came down to breakfast the morning after their arrival he found that Judson had disappeared.

Afraid that he might have taken his life in one of his spells of despondency, Asa and John scoured the city, visiting depots, docks, wharves, and parks. Weary and fear-ridden, they returned to the hotel, there to discover, perched on a reading-room table, a note from Judson addressed to the family: "John, Asa, Abby, you go home—I go to Texas."

"He didn't go to Texas, I know that." John was both relieved and angry. "And I don't reckon he's harmed himself. Maybe you'd better go up to Milford, Asa, to see if he's home. Abby and I will go to Lynn to see if he's with Jess."

"What'll we do about Ditson? We promised to see him today."

"He'll have to wait, Abby, until we find out what in tarnation Jud's up to."

Asa, making a fast trip, reached the old homestead after dark. His nervous knock was answered by Benjamin.

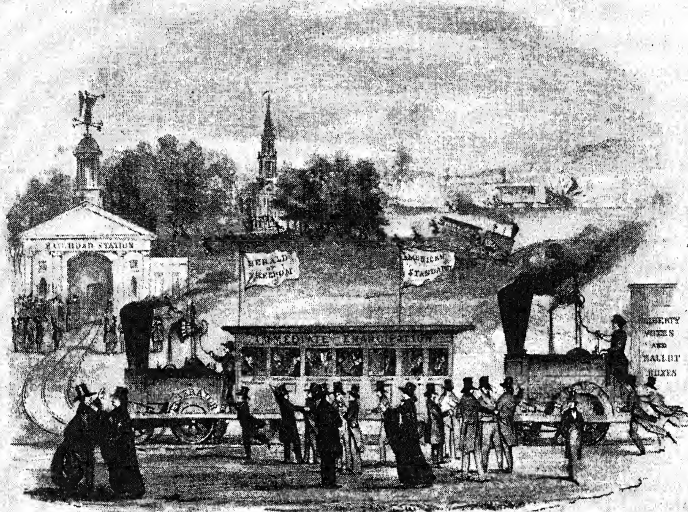
"Have you seen Judson?"

Benjamin smiled broadly and opened wide the door. "Where are John and Abby? You needn't worry about Jud; he's gone to Bedford to woo his girl."

Judson, when the family was gathered once more, made no explanations and offered no apologies for his abrupt departure from Boston, nor did he ever explain why he left a note saying that he was off for the Lone Star region. And no one ever questioned him. However, when John asked him whether he would continue to sing with the troupe, his refusal was determined, loud, and ardent. He would not sing again; he thought the entire venture foolish; he said there was more profit in farming; and he declared, with gestures, that every time he stepped before an audience he made a fool of himself. Anyway, he continued, it looked to him as if John was getting ready to settle down and that would be the end of the troupe.

John knew that Judson's mind, however firmly made up at the moment, was subject to quick change, but for the present there was no persuading him to resume the tour. So once again the Hutchinsons put aside thoughts of the stage and slipped

"GET OFF THE TRACK!"



A song for Emancipation. Sung by
THE HUTCHINSONS.
 Respectfully dedicated to
NATHAN P. ROGERS,

As a mark of esteem for his integrity in the cause of Human Rights—By the Author.

JESSE HUTCHINSON JUNR.

Printed & sold by Boston

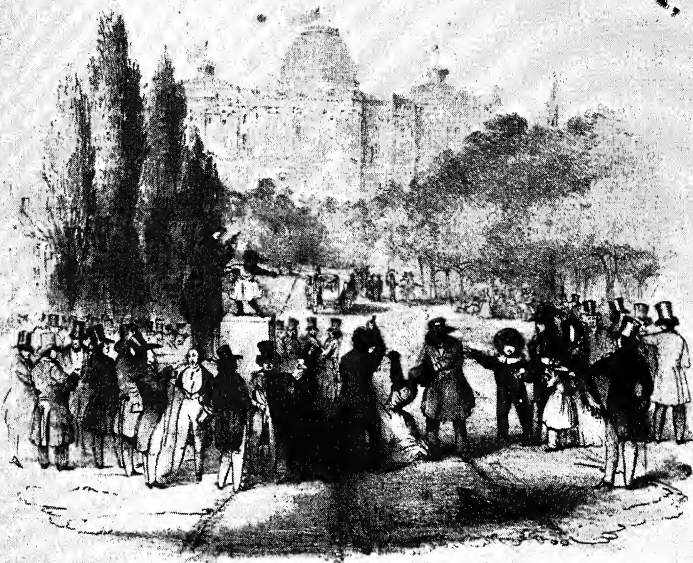
Price 25 cts per

BOOK FOR

Published by HENRY PRENTISS, 33 Court St.

Entered according to act of Congress in the year 1848 by J. Hutchinson, Jr. in the Clerk's Office of the District Court of Massachusetts

THE BEREAVED SLAVE MOTHER,



LITH. BY BOWEN & SHARP, BOSTON

Composed & Sung by the

HUTCHINSONS.

and Respectfully Dedicated to

LYDIA MARIA CHILD

as a token of Esteem for her fidelity to Humanity and
TO THE MOTHERS OF NEW ENGLAND

BOSTON

Published by HENRY PRENTISS 33 Court St

Entered according to act of Congress in the year 1846 by, Isaac Hutchinson in the Clerk's office of the District Court of Massachusetts

back into their role as farmers. Christmas was celebrated quietly. Old Jesse carved a ham and passed sturdy bowls of sweet potatoes, parsnips, and red cabbage salad. In the center of the table stood a plate of apples, polished until their red skins reflected light from the hanging brass lamp, and a basket of nuts gathered during the crisp days of early autumn.

As the New Year approached, John became increasingly restless. The isolated home seemed doleful and wearisome, and his "soul pressed forward and longed to tread that path that was sure to lead to success." Abby and Asa agreed with him, but Judson still showed complete indifference. So John went off to Lowell to plead his case with Fanny.

The Patch parlor looked strange and forbidding when he entered. He was more frightened than he had ever been on the concert stage and knew he was stumbling and mumbling like a country bumpkin. Fanny, her hair pulled into a knot at the back of the neck in the custom of the day, took pity on him, and when they kissed good night, they were engaged.

Fanny's genial disposition, ready wit, and pleasing contralto voice soon endeared her to every member of the family. Even old Jesse seemed pleased with her.

John and Fanny were married on February 21, 1843, but in the meantime the Hutchinsons had taken a long step toward their future. They had joined forces with the antislavery crusaders.



The troupe were resting in Milford when an invitation arrived from John A. Collins, prominent antislavery agent, asking them to sing at a great meeting to be held in Faneuil Hall on January 25, 26, and 27.

"I reckon we ought to go," said John. "This will give us a chance to win the friendship of a mighty powerful group."

Judson objected. "What's the sense of gettin' riled up about the slave? Let Dan'l Webster take care of that. Anyways, slavery is on the way out. The Missouri Compromise settled it."

"Not by a long shot. The South's jest itchin' fer a chance to push slavery wherever it can." This from young Jesse, who was home for a few days from Lynn, where he had fallen under the influence of the abolitionists. "Don't you ever read what Garrison writes?"

"No," said Jud emphatically. "I remember though a few years back they threw rotten eggs at 'im 'cause he wouldn't keep his nose out of the South's business. An' take that feller in Illinois—Lovejoy, Elijah P. Lovejoy. Well, he got kilt fer the same reason, an' I don't hanker fer none of that. We're singers—maybe jest farmers—an' we ain't fighters. I say we ought to stay shut of this slavery business."

John looked searchingly at the two. Judson and Jesse never hit it off any too well, and this looked like the beginning of another family quarrel that might send Jud off in a spell of the "horrors."

"Maybe you're right, Jud," he began soothingly. "An' perhaps you're right too, Jesse. A lot of folks are divided." They were both listening to him now, and he plunged ahead. "But there's a lot of Northerners who are goin' strong for liberty. We're Northerners, an' we stand for a strong Union. None of us hold with secession er nullification. A few years ago both of you was hoppin' mad at Senator Hayne when he debated with Webster an' said the states were stronger than the Union."

"What's all that got to do with slavery?" Judson was truculent.

"It's got everything to do with it. Slavery and secession are all mixed up together. If the South believes in states' rights, it also believes in slavery. I wouldn't trust South Carolina as fer as I could throw a granite elephant by the tail."

Judson grinned. "Maybe so," he admitted. "But I still don't see where we come in. We're singers, not politicians."

"Look, Jud." John leaned forward. "Slavery is no good, an' you know it. It'll never be good no matter where it is. Men are free—regardless of color. An' freedom's comin' right along. Cotton can't stop it. Calhoun couldn't stop it. Southern plant-

ers ain't goin' to be able to stop it. New Hampshire's a free state, an' I'm a free man, an' you and Jess an' I are goin' to fight fer freedom. We believe in the triumph of right over wrong. We got to go to Boston to the meetin'."

"You mean the Union ain't free till slavery's gone?"

"That's right. But look here, Jud. We don't have to make up our minds now. Let's try it out and see what happens. It won't hurt us none to sing at one antislavery meetin', an' then we can make up our minds. That suit you, Jud?"

"'Pears to be fair enough."

On this note of postponed decision, the Hutchinsons went down to Boston to sing at the January meeting, the beginning of their long antislavery associations.

Faneuil Hall held a noisy, enthusiastic audience when Francis Jackson, Boston's aristocratic municipal reformer, called the delegates to order for the opening session. His gavel fell again and again until finally the crowd sat silent, though heads turned to watch distinguished notables. William Lloyd Garrison, fiery editor of the *Liberator*, was there, taut and little relaxed even after a season at a water-cure establishment; Wendell Phillips, brilliant orator, sat regally on the platform as if conscious of his distinguished Bostonian background; Henry C. Wright, English reformer, was close by, giving the impression of tremendous energy; Nathaniel P. Rogers, editor of the *Herald of Freedom*, brushed absently at a lock of hair that dangled over his right eye; and Frederick Douglass, escaped slave and co-worker of Garrison's, fiddled with the buttons of his double-breasted jacket.

The Hutchinsons, resplendent in their colorful stage costumes, waited until Jackson signaled them. Then they stepped to the front, the hall became motionless, and their voices, resonant, strong, and richly touched with the passions of their own feelings, swelled in an old lament.

Forced from home and all its pleasures,
Africa's coast I left forlorn,

To increase a stranger's treasures,
O'er the raging billows borne.
Men from England bought and sold me,
Paid my price in paltry gold;
But though slave they have enrolled me,
Minds are never to be sold.

Rogers, with the keen eyes of a journalist, watched the multitude, broadcloth and linsey-woolsey alike, leap to their feet simultaneously, "as if in a dance," and toss and heave and clamor "like a roaring ocean." Never had the Hutchinsons received such an ovation.

Jackson, his own face flushed with excitement, finally restored order, so that Phillips might offer the first resolution. He stepped to the front of the platform, and his persuasive, well-modulated voice carried beyond the tiers of seats to rows of benches hurriedly placed in the back of the hall to accommodate late arrivals.

"Be it resolved," he said, "That no Abolitionist can consistently demand less than a dissolution of the union between Northern union and Southern slavery as essential to the preservation of the one and the abolition of the other." The orator hesitated for a dramatic moment and then launched into a well-knit address demonstrating that slavery and freedom could not readily exist side by side.

For three days the Hutchinsons, singing at every session, observed the campaign against slavery unfold under the clever strategy and brilliant oratory of men passionately convinced of their righteousness. On Friday came the climax. Jackson gave the floor to the editor of the *Liberator*, and Garrison, pale of face, offered the resolution he had dreamed of for years.

"Resolved," he said solemnly, "That the compact which exists between the North and the South is 'a covenant with death and an agreement with hell'—involving both parties in atrocious criminality—and should be immediately annulled."

Garrison continued in low, measured tones. "The proposition may be ridiculed and denounced, and some who call themselves

abolitionists may be loudest in their condemnation of it; but all this will avail nothing. The hour is coming when men of all sects and of all parties at the North will rally under one banner—The Banner of Liberty; and a similar coalition will be seen at the South rallying under The Black Flag of Slavery. It will not be a strife of blood but a conflict of opinions, and it will be short and decisive.”

This was strong language, and the resolution was so radical that Edmund Quincy said of its acceptance by the convention: “We dissolved the Union by a handsome vote, after a warm debate.”

John Hutchinson could hardly control his emotions enough, when Garrison had finished, to announce a song. He selected *The Bereaved Slave Mother*, written by young Jesse and sung now for the first time.

Oh deep was the anguish of the slave mother's heart,
When called from her darling forever to part;
So grieved that lone mother, that heart-broken mother,
In sorrow and woe.

The harsh auctioneer to sympathy cold,
Tears the babe from its mother and sells it for gold;
While the infant and mother, loud shriek for each other,
In sorrow and woe.

The poor mourning mother, of reason bereft,
Soon ended her sorrows and sank cold in death;
Thus died the slave mother, poor broken-hearted mother,
In sorrow and woe.

Oh! list ye kind mothers to the cries of the slave;
The parents and children implore you to save;
Go! rescue the mothers, the sisters and brothers,
From sorrow and woe.

Once again the audience sprang to their feet and “gave vent to their enthusiasm in a thunder of unrestrained cheering.” Rogers described the singing as “Humanity's jubilee cry” and

wrote in the *Herald of Freedom* that slavery should have died of the music and the response of the multitude. The Hutchinsons to him were not "hired performers," but fresh, young countrymen dedicated to freedom. "That they are Abolitionists," he continued, "may engender prejudice against them in the pro-slavery breast, but their lays will banish the demon from the meanest heart, as David's harp played the devil out of King Saul."

Garrison himself was appreciative of the dozen songs the troupe sang. On the last evening he offered a resolution that was passed by acclamation and later was published in the *Liberator*: "Resolved, That anti-slavery has rejoiced, from the beginning, in the aid of *Poetry*, which is naturally and instinctively on the side of liberty, it being impossible, in the providence of God, that Poetry should ever stoop her wing to the accursed service of slavery; and Humanity exults and rejoices in her other natural ally, *Music*, so gloriously represented here, in the old Liberty Cradle, by the 'New Hampshire Rainers,' whom Massachusetts abolitionism welcomes here from their White Mountains and thanks them for their free strains, in the name of down-trodden humanity."



John felt that never in his life had he been so utterly drained of energy as when he watched the last delegates and spectators file slowly from Faneuil Hall. The troupe returned to the Marlborough House determined to rest a few days before negotiating for the publication of their songs. It would do no harm, John remarked, to smooth a few rough spots before Ditson judged the manuscripts.

The family had not counted, however, upon their sudden popularity, occasioned by their singing at the antislavery convention and strengthened by enthusiastic comments in the newspapers of Boston and New York. Again and again the *Liberator* spoke of their "good music and strong abolitionist sentiments." John found that he could not enjoy a few minutes

in the Marlborough's reading room without interruption. Gentlemen whom he did not know greeted him and asked permission to present their wives and daughters. The mail was thick with requests for concerts, and antislavery adherents residing west of Boston and in Cambridge extended most hospitable invitations. In this manner the Hutchinsons met the leading political and literary figures of the day, including James Russell Lowell.

The poet was playing ball when John was introduced. "Can you manage a thing like this?" he laughed, tossing the surprised John a bulky, soft ball of woolen yarn covered with leather.

"I can try, although I've never seen one just like it. Up in New Hampshire we use a harder one."

"I don't doubt it, but a hard ball is too strenuous for us down here. Take off your coat. We'll see what you can do."

Lowell's throw landed the ball in John's ready hands and, without thinking, he hurled it back with such energy that it struck his opponent squarely in the middle of the forehead, so that Lowell winced and rubbed the spot vigorously. He made no complaint, however, and brushed aside John's abject apologies. "Little did I think then," John wrote many years later, after his acquaintance with Lowell had become friendship, "that I had wounded a future minister plenipotentiary."

Much as the Hutchinsons enjoyed popularity and new friends, they did not forget their business. When their songs were as good as they could make them, they went to call on Ditson.

Oliver Ditson's music house and publishing company, at the corner of Washington and School streets, stood in a historic neighborhood. No sooner had the troupe stepped into the long room, smelling of books and ink, than the proprietor greeted them:

"I'm glad to see you again, Mr. Hutchinson, and you also, Miss Abby. I hoped you'd be coming in. Everybody's talking about your antislavery performance. Did you bring your songs with you?"

Ditson led the way down a long, narrow aisle to the back of

the shop, where stacks of song sheets were piled. "We do good work, but we ought to. I've been in the business since I was thirteen." He fumbled through a heap of sheets. "Here's one of the first songs I published, *The City Guards Quickstep*. That was in July 1835, only about seven years ago, but it seems a long time now."

Ditson, as usual, rattled on without expecting answers. He pulled up a chair for Abby, saw that her overshoes were not too near the stove, and reached out a hand for the papers that John extended. He leafed through them rapidly, without enthusiasm, it seemed to Judson.

"You've got several here, I see. Maybe we better try printing one at first, just to see what happens. Do you have a preference? There's not much profit in songs like these."

John suspected that Ditson was only making the trader's move of belittling wares. If such was the case, he could follow as well as any Sam Slick. Hadn't Grandfather Leavitt said that successful bargaining was two-thirds know-how and one-third luck?

"Well," he drawled, "I don't rightly know if we wants any of 'em published now. We're aimin' to go down to New York come spring. I thought maybe you'd like to see 'em, though, before we went on up to Milford." The more he talked, the more Yankee his speech became. "Be you interested, we might leave 'em here. Take that there snow-storm song now. We picked that up in Vermont. The cold-water folks are powerful fond of *King Alcohol*—there's some tarnation smart lines in it. An' Abby here 'pears fond of the ballad 'bout Jamie on the stormy sea." He sighed as if the whole matter were distasteful. "Maybe it would pleasure us more if we waited a spell."

"The point is, Mr. Hutchinson, that I've got a lot of manuscripts on hand. My clerk's writing now to authors, saying we can't handle much more business. I'm planning to move from here to 115 Washington Street and I don't want to cart too much extra stock along. But this snow-storm item is unusual. Perhaps I could crowd it in."

"We ain't aimin' to trouble you none. That song kin wait for when we go to New York. We'd want a picture on it anyways."

Ditson apparently came to a sudden decision. "I tell you what we'll do. I'll print *The Snow Storm* with a lithograph by Thayer. Let me see." He figured on a yellow pad. "We can sell it for thirty-seven and a half cents and pay you two and a half cents on every copy sold."

"Nope," said John flatly. "We got four songs an' we want 'em all printed."

"But that's impossible. You're newcomers."

"No, we ain't. We're here an' we aim to stay." John could be stubborn if he wished.

Ditson recognized defeat when he met it. He wanted the Hutchinson business. Their success at Faneuil Hall had convinced him of that, and it was his business to know what music would sell and what would drag. But he was not willing to surrender all at once.

"Perhaps I could print the sentimental snow ballad now," he suggested, "with a cover design by Thayer, and I'd be willing to publish the others later in the year with my new address on them. What would you think of that?"

"Seems fair enough, but we'd want them all out in 1843."

"Good. Then we'll do it that way. I don't think you're making any mistake. After all, you know me and you don't know the New York publishers."

Ditson's clerk drew up an agreement that included the essential items discussed, and John signed it for the troupe. "There's one thing more," he said, sanding the sheet. "The words 'The Hutchinson Family' must appear in fancy type on every cover."

Ditson spread his palms. "You won't have to worry about that. Now I want to publicize the Hutchinsons as much as you do."

He was as good as his word. *The Snow Storm*, with words by Seba Smith and music by Lyman Heath, a composer whom the Hutchinsons had met in Nashua, was published in May with a dramatic cover design by Thayer and Company. *Jamie's on the*

Stormy Sea, *The Grave of Bonaparte*, and *King Alcohol*, without lithographs, followed throughout the year and bore Ditson's new address. Heath wrote the music for the Bonaparte song, and Bernard Covert, composer of *Sword of Bunker Hill* and later agent for the Hutchinsons, wrote the music for *Jamie's on the Stormy Sea*. The temperance glee was set to the tune of *King Andrew*. The price of *The Snow Storm*, as Ditson had said, was thirty-seven and a half cents, but the other three sold for twenty-five cents each. All featured the Hutchinson Family in elaborate type.

Their business with Ditson concluded, the Hutchinsons returned to Milford, carrying with them an invitation to sing at a New York antislavery meeting in May. Surprisingly enough, the elder Jesse offered no great objection when John said the quartet planned to spend the late spring and early summer away from home. Even Polly reconciled herself to Abby's leaving. Apparently the success that came when the children allied themselves with the antislavery movement had won over both parents.



Early in April the troupe decided to visit West Roxbury, where George Ripley's famous Brook Farm experiment, a communistic enterprise sponsored by reformers, mystics, poets, and hydrotherapists, advocated a kind of Christian socialism calculated to appeal to the endless varieties of liberals so prevalent during the forties. Emerson catalogued the reformers of the day as "Mad men, mad women, men with beards, Dunkers, Muggletonians, Come-outers, Groaners, Agrarians, Seventh-Day Baptists, Quakers, Abolitionists, Calvinists, Unitarians and Philosophers, all come successively to the top." Years later John, perhaps in partial explanation of the Hutchinsons' close affiliation with such groups, said: "It was practically impossible for us to have embraced the anti-slavery reform without being under the influence of and affected by, several other related reforms and movements."

Never had the boys imagined such a farm. No one, thought John, seemed to know or care what he was doing. Ripley, a former Unitarian minister in Boston, darted here and there for all the world like a barn swallow. But he introduced the Hutchinsons to John S. Dwight, Harvard graduate, talented musician, Unitarian pastor, and stanch believer in Brook Farm, where he taught music and the classics.

"Come over here," Dwight called. "I want you to meet a friend. He's washing clothes in the basement."

George P. Bradford, "faithful to every noble dream," was in suds to his elbows, but since there was no set time for completing any chore at Brook Farm, he put aside the dirty linen.

"Are you going to remain with us for long?"

"No, we just came over to visit and to sing for you tonight."

"You'd like it here, if you could get used to it. That takes a little while, though. I remember when Hawthorne came. He said the place was a 'polar Paradise' in winter, and complained that he spent five months feeding the horses and cows. I don't believe the real Hawthorne ever belonged to the Farm. He was glad when he left, I know he was."

"Wasn't Emerson here for a time too?"

"Oh yes. Emerson used to visit, but he never was one of us. He said to me once that Brook Farm was a 'perpetual picnic, a French Revolution in small, an Age of Reason in a patty-pan.'" Bradford stirred the linen with a listless toe. "Maybe we are scatterbrained, but you would enjoy our poetry reading, our picnics, and our masquerades."

The Hutchinsons' concert that evening opened with *The Old Granite State*, followed by the abolitionist songs recently sung in Boston. As a final number John selected the sentimental *Nothing True But Heaven*.

This world is all a fleeting show,
 For man's illusion given;
 The smiles of joy, the tears of woe,
 Deceitful shine, deceitful flow—
 There's nothing true but heaven!

And false the light on glory's plume,
As fading hues of even;
And love and hope, and beauty's bloom,
Are blossoms gathered for the tomb—
There's nothing bright but heaven!

Bradford was touched by a sort of "wild freshness" in the music, as if the Hutchinsons had been taught in their native woods and mountains. He wished they would remain in the community and even suggested it, timidly to be sure, after the concert. The brothers, on their part, were impressed by what they had seen. John felt that communistic living was an outward expression of the concept of the brotherhood of man. The idea was good if it could be realized, but he doubted that fulfillment was possible. Nevertheless, he decided to experiment with the scheme at home.

"For a time the old home in Milford," said John, "was a family Brook Farm" where everyone worked together in joyous labors without differences or competition. "Music was the theme that filled our hearts and souls as we went singing forth to the different departments of labor on the home farm, for we earnestly believed in this manner of life."

Perhaps John did attempt to imitate the methods of Brook Farm; perhaps while they were marking time before going to New York, the Hutchinsons played at communistic living. After all, they were young and zestful. But it is fairly certain that Jesse would have tolerated no new system calculated to disturb the orderly duties of each day, and the boys themselves could not have accepted the slipshod methods that even liberal Hawthorne and Emerson found impossible at West Roxbury.

The greening weeks of early spring passed happily. Even Judson, more like himself, did not shudder with the "horrors." Abby read, studied voice, and patched and sewed. Her kitchen chores completed, she wandered in the woods behind the quarry to return home with colorful bunches of wild flowers that thrust up almost before the last snows thawed. Blue, white, and yel-

low violets struggled toward the sun and, if she searched carefully, she found great clusters of cinnamon fern. Redstarts and ovenbirds sang and striped chipmunks chattered from stone walls.

Asa and John devoted leisure moments to the selection of new songs to take to New York. Among these was James B. Taylor's *We Are Happy and Free*, an Alpine melody arranged for a trio. Its gay, rollicking spirit expressed the Hutchinsons' contentment.

We are happy and free as a crew could be,
While our bark is sailing o'er the sea.
Our sheets we heave at the call of the brave,
For we love the home of the ocean wave.

"We had the good fortune to be 'in' at a rehearsal or two," a visitor to the Milford home wrote in the Boston *Mercantile Journal*, "and therefore 'speak advisedly' upon this point. There is a rich treat in store for music-lovers."

He described Father Jesse as a "healthy looking, although rather spare old gentleman," of about sixty-five. The household at the time consisted of the parents, Polly and Jesse; John and Fanny; Rhoda, her husband, and blue-eyed babe; Benjamin, Asa, and Abby; Cousin Ann; and "two others (who are in the employment of the family)." Isaac A. Bartlett, Rhoda's husband, managed the farm, and Benjamin had charge of finances.

When John read this account he was pleased and carried the paper to his father.

"Humph," Jesse grunted, holding the sheet at arm's length and squinting. "It 'pears to me sich stuff ain't news. Can't we live the way we want without havin' all our business in the paper?"

"I wouldn't let it trouble me, Father. People are interested in us and our songs. An' they're interested in you and how we all live together. Any notice 'bout us is good business."

Jesse surrendered. "Maybe so. When you aimin' to leave fer New York?"

"Well, I think we better go to Boston on May 4, stay there for a concert or two, and plan to get to New York on the tenth."

"When will you be home agin?"

"I reckon 'bout the first of June, if everything goes right."

"I'll count on you then fer summer farm work. Bartlett will need help." Jesse dropped the *Journal* and went to putter in the shed.

Jonathans in Gotham

ALTHOUGH he did not wear the red wig, bell-shaped hat, and striped coat and trousers that marked the stage Yankee of the forties, Asa was as awed and bewildered by the big city as any stereotyped rube who ever trod the boards. He was a Jonathan, a Bucktail, a Hiram Hireout. He said: "O! *New York* is all that I have had it represented to be; Boston does *not* compare with it for *life* and *business*. The Splendid Street '*Broad Way*' is the most splendid Street that I ever saw, and then the Grand Park, and the splendid *water works* where the water is thrown into the air to the height of 25 or 30 feet and then falls in to the Pool again in the most majestic style."

The Hutchinsons had reached New York in the early morning of May 9, 1843, after an exciting trip from Norwich on board the *Cleopatra*, a ship dainty in white paint and burnished brass. As the boat came to anchor near the Albany Basin on the Hudson River side, confusion was everywhere. The dock, bustling and congested, was jammed with clerks checking freight against entries penned on long, white ledger sheets and with sweating stevedores who gruntingly shifted casks and cases and boxes from ships to warehouses. Glad to escape the infernal, early-morning din, John led Asa, Judson, Jesse, and Abby to a rooming house at 65 Murray Street, a pleasant thoroughfare running from the Hudson to Broadway.

"Beats anything I ever seen," John said, pushing aside a fly-specked muslin curtain. "More than three hundred thousand people livin' here an' racin' up and down a street the likes of which I wouldn't believe."

Asa and Abby, always eager for adventure, badgered John

until he agreed to a walk up Broadway, a street they had heard was three miles long. Here was the shopping center of America's first city, and along the avenue's flagged sidewalks minced ladies in leg-o'-mutton sleeves, scoop bonnets, and crinolines. Judson commented on the variety of buildings and stores facing this busy, fashionable thoroughfare. The architecture of the buildings did not correspond, he thought, with the magnificent scale of the street. Handsome edifices of brick and even marble, four or five stories high, stood side by side with those of two or three stories and with miserable wooden cottages.

"Look there!" John hauled Abby up short. "Look at that!"

A Swiss emigrant, with a little woolly dog and a monkey, was tapping out a feeble, street-corner tune on a triangle and tambourine. Across the avenue, utterly indifferent to foreign competition, a minstrel, in parti-patched breeches, squat hat, and bare feet, married a melody to the crook shank and double shuffle. A yellow-faced newsboy with candlewick ringlets edged closer, his stack of *Herald's* crumpled against a thin chest.

"It's horrible music," shouted Abby, rising on tiptoes to make John hear. "Why don't you give the fellow something to go away. The monkey could do better."

A sixpence went spinning from John's hand. "There, there now, that will do; stop playin' and go away."

"Thank you zur, for the sixpence, but ve never stops playing or goes away under a shilling!"

Before many days the Hutchinsons learned that New York was a city of mendicant street singers, and they grew weary of the tunes of chimney sweeps and of vagabond ragamuffins who sang opera while peddling newspapers. "The highways and by-ways," lamented the *Mirror*, "the dark alley and the broad thoroughfare of business have become the opera-boxes of the city; the very paving stones cry out, and every Manhattan pump has learned to be vocal. You cannot pass a pile of pine boxes without music, or dodge through a defile of empty brandy-casks without encountering a concert."

Yet even street songs were alluring this bright May morn-

ing as Abby and her brothers wandered up Broadway. After observing shops, fine carriages, splendid gentlemen swinging walking sticks, and Jewish merchants hawking wares, they came to the corner of Broadway and Pine streets. Directly ahead was an old home of James Fenimore Cooper, widely known as the author of stirring, romantic tales of Indians, deer-slayers, and pioneers and pathfinders. Now in his early fifties, Cooper felt that the country was weary of him and his writing.

Judson, impatient and uninterested in Cooper's home, urged the family across the street where, like a gem against an emerald background, stood the white walls and spacious windows of Niblo's Gardens. Surrounded by the green of graceful trees and potted plants, Niblo's had long been one of the show places of New York and, with Castle Gardens, was a popular place of entertainment. A tinkling fountain splashed into a pool where goldfish played. William Niblo, Irish emigrant, purveyor of turtle soup and salmon, and manager of a Broadway stage line, judged the American temperament well when he first ventured into the amusement field in 1828. His little Sans Souci theater opened on July 4 of that year with gaudy banners and with balloons named for Washington, Jefferson, Governor Clinton, and Andrew Jackson.

Never had the Hutchinsons seen anything so elaborate as Niblo's establishment. He had added "new and splendid" saloons, erected temples, laid out walks and gardens, and dropped the too fanciful "Sans Souci" for the plainer "Niblo's Garden and Saloon." Abby was captivated by the place and gazed open-mouthed at announcements showing a wide variety of talent that Niblo's had presented to the public through the years. Indeed, the list was a catalogue of the best in American and foreign entertainment.

"Niblo's Gardens is worth a journey of fifty miles to see the fine flowers and plants," said Asa and added quickly, "O! New York is the place for me."

Weary but enthusiastic, the troupe wandered back to their Murray Street rooms to rest while Asa set down the details of

the morning excursion in his diary. That afternoon they attended an antislavery meeting at Apollo Hall on West Twenty-eighth Street, and afterward had tea at the Graham House with three prominent abolitionists: James Buffum, a friend of Brother Jesse's in Lynn, had a nervous habit of clicking a fingernail against his goblet; Francis Jackson, suave but forceful, talked in rolling sentences that untwined like a runaway ball of yarn; and Henry C. Wright spoke with the clipped speech of a Britisher. John was fascinated by their discussion of antislavery principles.

That evening Henry Wright took the troupe to a mass temperance meeting at the Broadway Tabernacle. Three thousand persons jammed the hall to cheer a cold-water address by the Reverend William Patton and a stirring sermon by Lyman Beecher. After the New York Choir had sung three numbers, Dr. Beecher introduced the Hutchinsons, who sang their favorites: *King Alcohol*, *We Are Happy and Free*, *The Old Granite State*, and *We Have Come from the Mountains*.

"We were greeted with Loud applaudits," wrote the happy Asa after the concert. "But the Old Granite State seemed to charm the whole audience so much that it was in vain to check them from the voluntary bursts of applause. They tryed very hard to bring us upon the stage the second time after the Granite Song but our caution was to large and we beged an excuse. Many at the close of the meeting came to us and took our hands. The efect of our music this Eve remaines to be told. If I mistake not, we shall receive patronage from the New Yorkers."



The family's first New York performance was advertised in the *Tribune* to take place at the Concert Hall, 406 Broadway, on the evening of May 13. The *Tribune* promised a variety of popular quartets, trios, and solos, "such as have not failed to please fashionable audiences in Boston and many other cities and towns in New England" and said further that the im-

50 SOL FRA **50**

HOWARD STREET TABERNACLE.

JUNE 17, 1843.

HUTCHINSON FAMILY.

At the earnest desire of numerous citizens, respectfully announce that they will give

A VOCAL CONCERT,

At the Tabernacle, in Howard Street, Boston, June 17th, 1843,

WHEN THEY HAVE THE ASSURANCE OF THE ATTENDANCE OF

THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES, & SUITE,

The Programme will embrace a good variety of their most popular Music.

Tickets 50 Cents, to be had at Prentiss', Keith's and Reed's Music Stores, and at the Principal Hotels

PARWELL'S PRESS, 8 AND 14 CONGRESS STREET, BOSTON.

ENTERTAINMENT TO COMMENCE AT 8 O'CLOCK.

50 HUTCHINSON **50**

A HUTCHINSON FAMILY HANDBILL

mense audience at the Tabernacle had been perfectly delighted and could scarcely be prevailed upon to release the New Hampshire singers from constant duty. Tickets were fifty cents and were on sale at music shops, hotels, and Saxton and Mile's bookstore.

When Jesse, who had left Lynn to join the troupe and was acting as business manager, counted only two hundred persons in the audience, he "just sighed and went down stairs." But John and Asa were delighted with a concert that went off "finely" and with a refined and enthusiastic crowd.

The next morning Judson was up bright and early. Murray Street, calm in a Sunday hush, was quiet except for the clatter of an occasional carriage, the blat of a calf, and the noise of Negro street criers. Far away the bells of St. Patrick's Cathedral called the faithful to Mass. Now and again he heard the raucous horn of a fish peddler and the tinkle of the charcoal cart's triangle. He loved these noises and went quietly to the parlor where, on an upright piano, lay the manuscript score of a new song he had worked on for days in hopes that he might introduce it at the next concert, which was to be given at the Society Library Room.

His accomplished fingers ranged the keys. Now and again he penciled a correction. He wanted *The Vulture of the Alps* to be a dramatic sensation that would rival John's favorite, *The Maniac*. It was an unspeakably pathetic narrative about the

agonized feelings of a parent at the loss of an infant child, snatched suddenly from its companions at play by a ravenous vulture. As he played, he hummed and then burst into the first verse.

One cloudless Sabbath summer morn, the sun was rising high,
When from my children, in the lawn, I heard a fearful cry,
As if some awful deed were done—a shriek of grief and pain,
A cry, I humbly trust in God, I ne'er may hear again.

Soon Jesse, and then Asa, slipped in, and the three worked over the manuscript, heightening the suspense here and softening the pathos there. Finally Judson pushed back the bench and swung around, his collar jerked from its stud and his tie dangling loosely. He tossed the soiled sheets to Jesse.

"There," he grunted, "it's done. You can announce it for the Library Room concert. I'm goin' back to bed."

They heard him stumble up the ancient stairway, mutter something to Abby, and slam his door violently.

"I'm goin' to do more than announce *The Vulture of the Alps* in the *Tribune* and *Herald* and *Post*," said Jesse. "Tomorrow morning, first thing, I'm goin' to order two hundred large handbills printed. The feller who printed our tickets tried to git me to do it the other day. He said it'd cost 'bout seventeen dollars, and I didn't want to spend so much then. Jud's new song makes it different."

"Be you goin' ter hire boys to pass 'em out?"

"No, I'm aimin' ter do it myself. I kin save at least a dollar that way."

Within two days, New Yorkers were reading bills announcing a concert at the New York Society Library Room, 348 Broadway, and promising a new and different song with music by Judson. The *Tribune* on May 17 said: "The Vulture of the Alps will also be sung this evening for the first time. Music original." Abby noted that the *Post*, edited by William Cullen Bryant, described their entertainment as "so arranged as to give it a kind of dramatic interest."

Nervous and hesitant when they stepped upon the stage of the fashionable Society Library, the Hutchinsons soon forgot their timidity in the warmth of an appreciative audience. Judson's *The Vulture of the Alps* was the third song sung and won more applause than any other number. Abby also scored a decided hit with her pathetic rendition of Henry Russell's *The Gambler's Wife*.

Dark is the night! How dark! No light, no fire!
Cold on the hearth the last faint sparks expire!
Shivering she watches by the cradle's side,
For him who pledged her love! Last year's bride.
Hark! It is his footsteps! No, 'tis gone!
List! list! How wearily the time rolls on!
Why should he leave me thus? He once was kind:
Rest, thee, my babe! Rest on! 'tis hunger's cry!
Sleep! for there's no food! The fount is dry!
Famine and cold, their wearying have done!
My heart must break! and thou!—the clock strikes one!

"New Yorkers are fer us now," commented Jesse, after the hall was emptied and the family had gathered to watch him count admissions. "We took in more than forty dollars—closer to fifty, I reckon, an' I never saw a song go over better than Jud's. The manager asked me to rent the hall agin for Thursday, an' I'm goin' to do it."

"Do you 'spose I could get my calomel song in shape for then?" Asa, a little jealous of Jud's new hit, suddenly became ambitious to complete a satire he had tinkered with for weeks.

It was a poor time for him to mention it. After a concert the Hutchinsons always were weary, and their tempers were brittle. Even John, generally affable, was apt to slip his temper.

"What song?" asked John, pretending ignorance.

"You know what song." Judson was quite willing to encourage a dispute.

"Why don't you let Asa answer?"

"I mean the poem that Dr. Beach gave us." Asa was going

to force the issue even though he knew full well what would happen.

"William Beach didn't give *us* a song. He gave it to *me*. You just took it, Asa, that's all." John could be unfair and obstinate when he wished. "You'll never write any music for it. You're never in the rooms long enough. All you do is gawk, like a rube, at New York and fill yourself full of Croton water. You drink more than a high-humped camel, an' then come home and scratch in your diary. You say," John began to mimic, "'The Trees look verdant, also the grass.'"

"You've got no right to go snoopin' in my diary!"

"Don't you snoop in my songs then. The anti-calomel song is mine an' I'm goin' to write the music for it. You jest keep on puddlin'."

Abby heard the quarrel continue long after 65 Murray Street was settled for the night, and the next day she noticed that the verses were gone from their place on Asa's table. She lived in fear that either John or Asa would return to the subject, but nothing happened and gradually her apprehensions faded in plans for the Library Room concert on May 25. This was to be the grandest of all. Jesse took generous space in the newspapers and listed the program in detail.

There were six quartets: *Blow On! Blow On!; Come Hunters, Young and Old; Let Us All Be United; Health to My Dear; The Mountain Bugle*; and *Sweet Home Receive Me*. There were also five solos: *The Irish Emigrant's Lament, We Are All Cutting, The Snow Storm, The Nice Young Man*, and *The Maniac*. *The Lady of Beauty* was announced as a trio, and the finale, as always, was *The Old Granite State*.

For some time Jesse had thought the family programs were overheavy with dramatic tragedies, and it was he who suggested the inclusion of Phillips' amusing comedy, *The Nice Young Man*. Usually John sang it, but sometimes Judson took over the story.

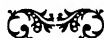
There was a young man by the name of Brown,
And he wore two dangling curls;

While his hair was combed quite back from the crown,
And hung down behind like the girls'.
Oh! his pants were like draw'rs and he'd gloves on his paws,
And he carried a neat white fan,
And widows and wives, said they never in their lives
Had seen such a nice young man.

The tailors were shy of this winning youth,
For his bills he never paid;
And the girls, dear souls, believed he spoke the truth
Whenever a word he said.
One night he told a miss there was heaven in her kiss,
While to steal her jewels he began,
And yet the silly maid smil'd while she said
"La! sir—you're a nice young man."

He used to go to church with great sobriety,
And he sung the hymns out loud;
But, still he ne'er could see much impropriety
In slight-of-hand amongst the crowd.
He taught a sabbath class and ogled every lass,
While preaching life's narrow span;
The old folks were blind, for they'd made up their mind
That he was such a nice young man

For once Jesse was fully satisfied, not only with the program itself, but also with the audience, for eager New Yorkers crowded the room, stood in aisles and passages, and clamored for admittance long after all standing space was occupied. *The Irish Emigrant's Lament* provoked great applause and the crowd's laughter broke through again and again before John completed his comic story of the nice young man. The *Tribune* wished the "gifted, brotherly band all the success they so richly deserve" and said their style of singing was "admirable, simple and sweet and full of mountain melody."



Brimming with enthusiasm, the Hutchinsons, led by John, who had bargained so successfully with Ditson, called next

morning at the Broadway offices of Firth, Hall and Pond. Although satisfied with Ditson's publication of earlier songs, both Asa and John thought it desirable to tempt New York's largest musical publishers with new material.

"It'll do no hurt to have a New York publisher, too." John pushed open the door and stood uncertainly within a large, bright room whose long counters were heaped with sheet music.

A man whom Asa judged to be in his late forties strode forward with a straight back and erect carriage that suggested the soldier. "I'm William Hall," he said, "and I regret that my partners aren't here this morning to welcome the Hutchinsons." He smiled. "You've made quite a name for yourselves in the short time you've been in the city. Henry Russell—he was here a few minutes ago—told me he never sang *The Maniac* as well as Mr. John did last night. What can we do for you?"

"We want to find a publisher for these." John shoved a stack of manuscripts toward Hall.

"I thought Mr. Ditson did most of your publishing. He's a good printer and enjoys a fine reputation."

"The truth is we'd like a New York publisher. Ditson's been fine to us, but . . ."

"I see," nodded Hall. "Well, let's go on back to a piano and run through the music. How many do we have here?"

"Twelve," said John.

Hall laughed. "I heard the Hutchinsons had one of the largest repertoires of any family group, but I didn't think you'd bring in that many manuscripts at one time. We've never printed a round dozen for anybody."

He spread handsome broadcloth tails neatly over the piano bench and played through three manuscripts—*The Cot Where We Were Born*, *Vesper Song at Sea*, and *We Are Happy and Free*—without stopping. As he picked up the fourth, he turned to John. "Here's Longfellow's 'Excelsior' set to music. How did you happen to select this?"

"It's a good song, isn't it?" John never hurried when he traded. "We first read the poem a few weeks ago—someone

on the cars from Boston showed it to us—and then day before yesterday I called on Mr. Longfellow at the Astor House. He was pleased to write a little introduction.” John took a folded note from his hat. “Here it is. Longfellow said it would explain what he meant. Read it, if you want to.”

“This poem represents the continued aspirations of Genius. Its Motto *Excelsior* (still higher) is a word in an unknown tongue. Disregarding the everyday comforts of life, the allurements of love, and the warnings of experience, it presses forward on its solitary path. Even in death it holds fast its device, and a voice from the air proclaims the progress of the Soul in a higher sphere.’

“So Longfellow gave you this, did he?” The publisher knew he could use a song with an explanation by the author of a thin volume of antislavery poetry printed the previous year. Longfellow’s abolitionist verse had caused heated discussion, and Hall always was willing to publish stanzas by a rising author. He laid the *Excelsior* manuscript aside.

Judson fumed and muttered to himself as Hall leisurely and without comment drummed through the scores for *Our Father’s Hearth*, *Cape Ann*, *The Vulture of the Alps*, and *A Rock in the Wilderness*. Even John grew a trifle uneasy and wondered if Hall could be manipulated as easily as Ditson.

“You say you’ve four more?” Hall turned to John. “You gave me eight.”

Once more John dug into the tall beaver hat and came up with *My Mother’s Bible*, *Axes to Grind*, and *Go Call the Doctor, or Anti-Calomel*. The publisher played through these as rapidly as he had the others, frowning now and again and occasionally transposing. Then he turned back to *My Mother’s Bible*. “Would you sing G. P. Morris’ words to this music?” he asked.

John, as usual, took the first verse as a solo, but the quartet sang every other stanza after that.

This book is all that’s left me now,
Tears will unbidden start;

With faltering lip and throbbing brow,
I press it to my heart.

For many generations past,
Here is our family tree;
My mother's hands this Bible clasp'd,
She dying gave it me.

Hall made no comment. "Try the anti-calomel number now, will you?" was all he said.

This was Judson's opportunity, for usually he was the comic member of the troupe. His falsetto was a perfect medium for burlesque and satire. He began the song that John and Asa had quarreled about, the song that John had finally worked into shape, setting it to the tune of *Old Hundred*. It made sport of regular physicians who pinned their faith to mercurial drugs, bloodletting, and heroic doses of calomel.

Physicians of the highest rank
(To pay their fees, we need a bank)
Combine all wisdom, art and skill,
Science and sense, in calomel.

Howe'er their patients may complain
Of head, or heart, or nerve, or vein,
Of fever high, or parch, or swell,
The remedy is calomel.

When Mr. A. or B. is sick—
"Go fetch the doctor and be quick"—
The doctor comes, with much good will,
But ne'er forgets his calomel.

Judson stopped. Three verses ought to be enough to give Hall the idea.

"Go on!" cried the publisher impatiently. "Sing all of it."

He takes his patient by the hand,
And compliments him as a friend;
He sets awhile his pulse to feel,
And then takes out his calomel.

He then turns to the patient's wife,
"Have you clean paper, spoon and knife?
I think your husband might do well
To take a dose of calomel."

He then deals out the precious grains—
"This, ma'am, I'm sure will ease his pains;
Once in three hours, at sound of bell,
Give him a dose of calomel."

He leaves his patient in her care,
And bids good-by with graceful air.
In hopes bad humors to expel,
She freely gives the calomel.

The man grows worse, quite fast indeed—
"Go call the doctor, ride with speed."
The doctor comes, like post with mail,
Doubling his dose of calomel.

The man in death begins to groan,
The fatal job for him is done,
He dies alas, but sure to tell,
A sacrifice to calomel.

But when I must resign my breath,
Pray let me die a natural death,
And bid the world a long farewell,
Without one dose of calomel.

A burst of applause jerked Judson around to see a knot of clerks and customers lured by the catchy tune and sprightly words of the medical satire, which had been printed as early as 1820 in the *Athenian*, a newspaper at Athens, Alabama, and had appeared, with variations, in Thomsonian texts and water-cure journals. It was plain enough that Hall was impressed, yet he hesitated.

"I'd like to consider these," he said slowly. "Perhaps if you'll come back in the morning, I can give you an opinion."

That suited John perfectly. There did not seem to be much of the trader in Hall, he told Asa, adding quickly, "If there is, it's too deep for me. He's a smart 'un."

That night, when Broadway lights beckoned softly and the cries of newsboys stirred the air, the Hutchinsons walked arm in arm to meet Henry Russell and G. P. Morris. The talk was of music—the music that Americans loved. Morris, in his easy manner, sprinkled with wit, argued that the people wanted songs that came from their own experiences and to prove his point cited the popularity of his own *Croton Water Celebration*, a song about the new and still novel Croton reservoir, from which water was piped to the faucets and fountains of the growing city. He said he was attempting an Indian song in folklore tradition. Russell nodded agreement; he had used the Indian theme in his ballad of Pocahontas and John Smith.

Never had the Hutchinsons been so enthralled, and they were pleased beyond measure when Russell leaned forward and said seriously, "I think you are the best singers in America, and I told William Hall so." Morris clapped his hands with sincere approval.

It was not quite nine when the Hutchinsons filed into the rooms of Firth, Hall and Pond the next morning. A fine drizzle wet Broadway and servants scurried from shuttered shops with open umbrellas that swayed in a frivolous wind. Early as it was, Hall was at his desk. Spread before him lay the Hutchinson manuscripts, and he was talking with a sparse gentleman whose tapering fingers were stained with ink.

"This is Mr. Endicott. He does most of my engraving. You saw his illustration of the dancing Negro boy yesterday on the cover of *Jim Along Josey*."

John wanted to know how engravers worked, and the talk turned to plates and processes and ultimately to cover designs. Then Jesse found himself describing an illustration appropriate for the family songs. Endicott nodded and made notes. It was taken for granted, without anyone's mentioning the fact directly, that Hall would publish all twelve manuscripts and

that New York's distinguished lithographer would do the art work. After a time Hall said casually that the songs would sell for from twenty-five to thirty-eight cents and that he saw no reason why the Hutchinsons should not receive from two and a half to three and a half cents on each copy sold. Printing would begin as soon as Endicott's plate was ready for their approval.

That afternoon an artist sketched Judson, Abby, John, and Asa against an indistinct background of evergreens and rising hills. He showed the boys' flowing hair, long-tailed coats, five-button waistcoats that came to a point, and tight-fitting trousers. Abby was drawn with earrings, a velvet ribbon around her neck, and a voluminous dress with straight sleeves. Judson appeared as very tall, and the facial expressions on all four were crude.

The first few songs, including *We Are Happy and Free*, were adorned with this somewhat hurried sketch. Within the year, however, the Hutchinsons persuaded Hall and Endicott to redraw the illustration. Judson's height was reduced considerably, the Souhegan River was added to the background, and the mountains were made higher and clearer. The black ties on the boys became less stringy and more flowing. The waistcoat points were cut off, like a mess jacket, and another button was added. Abby's appearance changed most of all. The ribbon about her neck was replaced with a square brooch at the throat. Her head now turned slightly to the right in order to show puffs of hair behind the ears, and the earrings disappeared. She was clothed in a more elaborate creation with ruffles on the sleeves and a graceful neckline.

Weary from standing quietly while Endicott's assistant stroked out the original sketch, the family, after signing a simple contract with Hall, plodded through the May rain to their lodginghouse to talk of Hall's informal business methods. Asa wasn't certain but that hoodwinking was the order of the day. Jesse reassured him. The songs, he said, would sell well with a handsome illustration by Endicott. That night Asa

scribbled in his diary: "Oh dear. We must soon die, therefore let us not think to much of the things of *this* world."



With no more concerts scheduled and happy over their dealings with Firth, Hall and Pond, the Hutchinsons set about seeing the sights of New York. These were almost as important to them as their concert successes, for they were eager, curious, and still very young. Abby was not yet fourteen, Asa was twenty, John twenty-two, Judson twenty-six, and Jesse twenty-nine.

Asa, of course, still clung to his beloved waterworks. He seemed never to grow tired of faucets and fountains, and he filled his diary with enthusiastic mention of them. The immensity of the bustling city, with its clattering omnibuses, swearing volunteer firemen, and resonant street criers, bothered him. Unconsciously he sought the peace of running water that soothed his uneasiness and helped him to forget family quarrels. The previous night Jesse had kicked Judson, and now Asa, sitting near the fountain in City Hall Park, murmured: "O what a pity we cannot get along without fighting."

Abby, proudly carrying a colorful sunshade, frequented the shops, to return laden with small articles and gifts for every member of the family from Rhoda's youngest child to Grandfather Leavitt. Her heart sang, for she was free from family domination and was a New York celebrity. Try as she might to subdue false pride, she couldn't help being thrilled when she was pointed out as one of "the Hutchinsons" or when clerks recognized her.

Judson and John, perhaps more childlike than any of the others, romped and fought on the beds and then lay back breathless to plan excursions. They took the ferry to Hoboken, where the trees were in bloom, and chased one another over fresh, new grass. One morning, saying nothing to anyone, they sneaked guiltily away, like kids on circus day, to spend hours at the American Museum. There they met Phineas T. Barnum

himself. America's greatest showman introduced them to General Tom Thumb, not two feet high and weighing less than sixteen pounds. Barnum had discovered him the previous November and was still paying him less than twenty-five dollars a week. Side by side with the little general stood Master J. F. Reed—the Giant Boy—who was, Barnum said with a straight face, only eleven years old, weighed two hundred and sixty-five pounds, and stood six feet two inches tall.

Midgets and giants, however, were nothing—"nothing at all," said Barnum—compared with the City of Paris, a miniature city carved from wood that covered two hundred and fifty feet, or with T. Nathans, snake charmer extraordinary, who, Jud thought, teased a boa constrictor the way he poked a New Hampshire night crawler. Barnum pulled them from one exhibit to another so rapidly they could scarcely list their adventures when they came home at night. "He wants us to come back in a fortnight," stuttered Judson. "He's goin' tuh have an automatic musical lady that plays the accordion. Says she cost twenty-five thousand dollars!"

Long after dark that night John slipped from bed to write: "What a day! O! My! What a day!"

Despite the lure of Gotham, they could not remain forever. Jesse had set May 26 as the day when they must leave by boat for Boston. In the rush of packing, Abby left her sunshade behind and broke a beautiful green bouquet pitcher presented by admirers after a concert. As the *Worcester* pulled out, the Hutchinsons waved farewell to a group of friends gathered to see them off.

After a series of concerts in Boston, the troupe arrived in Milford, and there the elder Jesse at once put them to work at farm chores. "I have done more work today," wrote John sadly on Monday, "than I have for two months before—assisting the women folk with their washing, which was very large indeed."

Money Makes the Mare Go

FOR three months the Hutchinsons slipped easily into their role of New Hampshire farmers, interrupting their tilling occasionally to bathe in the July-warmed Souhegan, to fish for fat chub in the deeper pools, and now and again to leave Milford for brief concert trips through the countryside.

August brought excitement. Judson announced, quite casually, that on the seventh he was marrying Jerusha P. Hutchinson, eight years younger than he and a distant relative. And the day following their simple wedding, Jesse's wife Susannah presented him with a lusty son, their fourth boy. Grandfather Leavitt held the yowling Jesse Herbert for baptism and hoped fervently he might live. Jesse's other children had all died in infancy.

John and Asa and Abby, thwarted by Jud's marriage and Jesse's determination to stay by the cradle, temporarily relinquished all thought of group rehearsals and did little more than gesture at solo practice.

Early in September 1843, however, their depression passed and the troupe returned to New York eager and confident, as befitted America's most distinguished band of family singers.

Here, between concerts, they made the acquaintance of Isaac T. Hopper, Quaker bookseller and ardent abolitionist, who now and again sat with them for an evening, spinning yarns of the Pennsylvania Underground Railroad and talking of politics. Lydia Maria Child, who lived with the Hoppers "as a daughter and a sister," recounted her adventures as editor of the *Anti-Slavery Standard*, saying wryly that an antislavery editor "is a sort of black sheep among the fraternity, and I have no cour-

tesies from booksellers." Her squarish face and thin-clamped lips were deceiving. A universal tenderness permeated her, so that she had to steel herself against too generous giving. Involved in the bitterest and sternest controversy of the age, she nevertheless managed to retain her good humor and personal gentleness.

The evenings with Hopper and Mrs. Child bore fruit slowly but steadily. The Hutchinsons, one by one, came to appreciate the well-turned phrase, the neat logic of the syllogism, and the value of clear, straight thinking. For the first time they became really aware of a nation in transition and caught the deep spiritual significance of social forces that even Garrison's blazing oratory failed to illuminate. Yet John was impatient with caution; he was sure that compromise was only a sign of weakness in the North and an ineffectual sop to the South.

Their concerts, however, gave no evidence of this emergence of a deeper insight and a fuller comprehension of national problems. Hall, the publisher, warned them bluntly that they must make a choice between entertainment, which the people loved, and the slave controversy, which people were getting mighty tired of. Jesse recognized this as good business and weighed its implications well between programs at the Brooklyn Institute and Henry Ward Beecher's Plymouth Church. He made his conclusion crystal-clear one evening after a concert.

The Hutchinsons were in their rooms. Jud, collar askew as usual, lay peacefully on the bed. Asa was penning something in his diary, and John was wondering if he could afford a daguerreotype to send to Fanny.

"What are we singing for?" Jesse put the question square and straight.

Jud quit fiddling with his fingers and shut his eyes. "Fe, fi, fo, fum, I smell an argument comin' on."

"Stop it, Jud. Jesse's got somethin' on his mind."

"It's just this." Jesse spoke slowly, almost quietly. "I think it's time we made up our minds 'bout the business we're in. I went into the stove business in Lynn 'cause I wanted to sell

stoves. Now I'm in the song business. I want to know what we're sellin', that's all."

Asa wiped his pen. "We're sellin' music, just like that charcoal cart out there is peddlin' charcoal. Only we make louder noise."

"Be you thinkin' we're only music peddlers? If you do, I'm quittin' right here and now." Jesse had their attention. Even Judson jerked up to a sitting position. "The woods are full of musicians, an' you bump into 'em everywhere from Broadway to the Battery. You know we're not the only family troupe on circuit—there's the Bakers and the Rainers and the Peaks and the Cheney Family from Vermont. There are old folks' troupes and Ethiopian serenaders and white-faced black minstrels. Barnum can get 'em by the dozen, all he wants. We've got to be *different*."

"Different how, Jess?"

"As I see it, the family's got to remember it's singin' fer money. That comes first. Forget that an' we're through. Singin' fer fun gets us nowhere. Now, how much we make depends on what we sing and how we sing. The *how* part of it is all right. The *what* bothers me. If we just go in fer entertainment we'll do good, but not good enough. If we hold to whoopin' it up for temperance and abolition, we're bound to lose too. Mix entertainment and abolition an' I think we'll go farther and faster than any competitor. Some folks'll come to hear us fer pleasure. Some'll come because they like our views. That way, we get both. See what I mean?"

They argued back and forth awhile, but they finally agreed that Jesse's proposal was sensible and offered the greatest prospects for profits. "But we'll make enemies one way or t'other," John added.

By the end of December they had worked out a series of nicely balanced programs calculated to appeal to every taste and temperament except alcoholics, bloodletters, and slaveholders. With these they would make no compromise, profits or no profits!

The Hutchinsons arrived in Philadelphia, on their first visit to that city, late in the afternoon of New Year's Day 1844, and went directly to a Quaker and abolitionist boardinghouse at 99 Arch Street. John, Abby, and Asa immediately sat down to enter pious resolutions in their journals. "I do hope that I may spend this Year '44 with (if kind Providence allows me to *live*) more general benefit to myself and my fellows." Asa's pen flowed on. He was nearing the bottom of a page. "I wish that I might forsake all that is evil. I trust I shall refrain from Profanity and every immoral thought and act. I entertain a desire to treat My Brothers & Sister *better* and to respect the 'Good Old Parents,' Jesse and Mary, and heed their advice, and not be instrumental in bringing them down to the tombe with sorrow. I am thankful we are all well."

Judson raised a window and leaned far out to catch a bedlam of noise rolling down Arch Street. As the cries and shouts and clatter of iron wheels on cobbles grew louder, a volunteer fire company came into view, racing along with a blue and silver gooseneck pumper that had a small tripartite keg containing brandy, spirits, and gin buckled to the shaft. Ahead ran the captain. His white leather helmet with black numerals was shoved back, and he bellowed profane directions, warnings, and encouragement through a shining brass trumpet. Asa heard him plainly.

"Faster, you lead bastards. God dammit, pull! Left at the next corner. Harder, you sons of . . ."

Jud slammed the window, hard. Asa turned a page and wrote indignantly: "Philadelphia has a large circle of Moral people, but the firemen are the most outrageous persons that are known in this republic! They pass by our room in a fiendish manner."

On the evening of January 3, after two days of intensive practice, the troupe gave their first concert at the Musical Fund Hall on Locust Street. As usual, worry about the size of the crowd brought Judson and Abby to the platform wet with nervous perspiration. They were assured of at least thirty-five

persons, for John had given away that many complimentary tickets. But the hall's rental was forty dollars, and they were none too optimistic.

Almost three hundred turned out to hear them, however, and at least half, said Asa, insisted upon congratulating them personally. From the night of this first concert the troupe never lacked for entertainment and amusement. Invitations to dinner arrived from local editors, and strangers on the street offered to guide them to points of interest.

Invitations became a problem, for the Hutchinsons soon found that neat cards requesting their company for dinner implied much more than an evening of relaxation. Even the most considerate hostess felt quite justified in requesting a song or two, and one song led to another until the family had practically presented a full-course concert. "Now this is not always pleasant to us," sputtered Asa, "especially when practicing for our concerts all day. We are very excitable. We must learn to say no! It is hard, but we must adopt it."

Another problem that provoked endless controversy was Asa's insistence upon low admission charges. He was perfectly unreasonable, John argued, to champion a fee of less than fifty cents. But Asa invariably advanced the same argument: "I believe it is wrong to exclude the *Laboring Class* by having the price of admission far beyond their *means*. A laboring man cannot afford to pay fifty cents to hear vocal music when he has a large family to support. But still a greater point. We cannot be so *free* to sing *high* and *lofty sentiments* to an audience when we feel bound to sing to their 'Pockets' instead of their hearts."

John, Jesse, Judson, and Abby always listened attentively to Asa's impassioned arguments, but they never comforted him by lowering prices unless they were in such a tiny and impoverished village that they were forced to. Then, strangely enough, Asa grumbled at the slimness of the purse. "It's jest a part of Asa, that's all," John said once in explanation of his brother's inconsistency.

Despite their bickerings and differences, the family enjoyed the City of Brotherly Love. In 1844 the heart of the city that William Penn called his "greene countrie towne" lay east of Broad Street and a few blocks north and south of Market. More than ninety thousand residents—flat-hatted Quakers, beaver-hatted merchants, red-turbaned Negro servants, flower-bonneted ladies—walked streets with names that jingled:

High, Mulberry, Sassafras, Vine;
Chestnut, Walnut, Spruce, and Pine.

Long rows of substantial red brick houses lent an air of respectability, and broad streets fanned out to a countryside made secure and prosperous by diligent, home-loving Pennsylvania Dutch. Tucked within the city, in odd corners, were old-fashioned churches, houses still wearing proudly the nicks of war, and, at the end of Arch Street, the picturesque home of Betsy Ross. Oystermen, resplendent in top hats and full-tailed coats, sold "raws" from spring wagons, and hucksters sang, in a dozen dialects, their wares—scrapple, smearcase, fish, home-made noodles, shoo-fly pie—at stalls in the Second Street Market. Above all rose the spiritual prominence of stately Independence Hall.

A thread of culture was woven securely into the pattern of daily life. Philadelphia had long been recognized for its printers, men of medicine, and musicians. So when the Hutchinsons received an invitation to sing with the Philharmonic Society, they were delighted. They were ready long before curtain time and could scarcely endure the forty-five long, dragging minutes they had to wait backstage while instruments were brought to proper pitch.

Then the thrilling, pulsing overture crashed from the orchestra without warning, and the Hutchinsons moved from behind a screen onto the stage in view of an immense audience of "Con-nois-seurs & amateurs" waiting silently to see the characters of whom it had heard so much. *The Grave of Bonaparte* was followed by *We Are Happy and Free*. "After thun-

derous applause," said Asa, "we sang *The Origin of Yankee Doodle*, *Good-Morning*, and *The Old Granite State*."

The following morning, before leaving for Baltimore, the family had a business session. They had collected more than eleven hundred dollars during their twenty-day stay in Philadelphia. "Money makes the mare go," cried John, slapping his leg. Asa looked sour.

"Better find yourself a hatter," he grunted. "Your head'll be gettin' too big."



Two factors militated against success in Baltimore. In the first place, the Hutchinsons were becoming known for their strong antislavery tendencies, and Maryland was a slave state. In the second place, the family was anti-Catholic. When they rented Calvert Hall from a priest, Protestants would not attend a concert given there and Catholics did not care to. Total receipts from the first performance were fifteen dollars. The hall's rental was twenty dollars. "This was the smallest affair that we have had for many days," wrote Asa.

Baltimore meant slavery to the troupe. Everywhere they went they read slavery into what they witnessed. Asa, who had just read Cassius M. Clay's letter on the evils of slavery, walked with John and Judson to Hope Slatter's prison, "where were confined slaves of every texture of skin, young and old, male and female, gathered up from all the surrounding country like cattle, forced into this den to fatten in preparation for the great Southern mart and the plantations of the South." The Monumental City was the center of the domestic slave trade for years, as blacks were carried across the Atlantic in fast Baltimore clippers and great numbers of escaped slaves captured in Pennsylvania and New York were returned to their owners by way of Baltimore.

"I don't like a slave state. Freedom does not reign here," said Asa, turning away from the sorry sight of penned slaves

who flexed their muscles and bared their backs, thinking the Hutchinsons were long-haired traders. To forget Hope Slatter and his prison, Asa that night read aloud from Lydia Maria Child's *Letters from New York*. And at the second concert, which brought in about thirty dollars, John emphasized the equal rights of man.

The troupe left Baltimore for Washington convinced of the Maryland city's evil devotion to slavery and Catholicism. Yet they had made progress even in Baltimore, for at their last concert they took in a hundred dollars.

Washington was neither city nor village. Four years earlier the French minister had described it as a "building-yard placed in a desolate spot wherein living is unbearable." Even Charles Dickens, friendly enough to America, called the nation's capital a "City of Magnificent Intentions" and spoke of spacious avenues that began in nothing and led nowhere. The Hutchinsons too were disappointed, saying that despite Washington's many fine buildings, it is "not so grand a place as I had previously anticipated." They could hardly fail to notice, close to the imposing Capitol, a cow pasture, a slaughterhouse, and some odorous pigpens.

Levi Woodbury, a New Hampshire representative of the commercial interests of New England, escorted the family, done up in its very best, to one of President Tyler's twice-a-week evening parties at the White House. About a thousand guests milled around in the East Room. "There were many pretty, good-looking maidens," commented Asa, "but I pitied them laced up as they were so that they could scarcely bend and with their dresses and shoes hardly fit for summer wear." John Tyler, wifeless for two years, brought his daughters and his son-in-law, Robert Semple, to be introduced. The President was his usual charming self, courteous and affable, and soon put the awkward Hutchinsons at ease.

A few nights later they again visited the White House to sing for a number of the President's friends. Asa said that the Virginian was very kind, and John, knowing that Tyler was a

slaveowner, wrote that "he was not as bad a man as he had been represented to be."

It is doubtful that a new verse which had been added to the family song was sung for the President and his friends. Inspired by their abolitionist successes in Boston, New York, and Philadelphia, the Hutchinsons, firmly convinced that slavery must go, expressed their feelings in a stanza to be sung for the first time in Washington.

Liberty is our motto
And we'll sing as freemen ought to
Till it rings through glen and grotto
From the Old Granite State—
That the tribe of Jesse
Are the friends of equal rights.

Within a short time the last two lines were changed to four.

Men should love each other,
Not let hatred smother,
Every man is a brother,
And our country is the world!

John read the original version to John P. Hale, New Hampshire's Democratic congressman but an independent withal. Hale made no comment at the time.

The first Washington concert was sung in the Assembly Hall on February 1. In the audience sat many of Washington's distinguished figures and a sampling of every shade of political opinion. Soft-spoken southern slaveholders were there with their ladies, and legislators from the border states mingled with men from the North who ranged in sentiment from the "let-slavery-alone-it-will-die-out" school to rabid followers of Garrison.

During the intermission Congressman Hale came to the dressing room in great agitation. "Are you going to sing that new verse of the family song?" he inquired anxiously.

John turned. "Of course we are."

"Don't," he said. "I beg you not to sing it tonight. I'd rather give you my head for a football than have you do it."

"What's wrong with it?"

"There's nothing *wrong* with it, I guess," Hale answered wearily. "But sectional feelings race at full tide in Washington. Half that audience are southerners. You'll do the anti-slavery cause no good and yourselves a lot of harm if you sing what you read to me."

He waited while the brothers debated. They loathed making any compromise with their convictions, and all too frequently opposition only whetted their ingrained stubbornness. "I guess you're right," John finally admitted. "We'll skip it tonight."

"Thank God!" Hale returned to his seat at ease for the first time since the performance began.

The first song after intermission was John Sinclair's *Johnny Sands*, a comic favorite that Judson always sang with great enjoyment. Oliver Ditson had published it in 1842, and it had won instant approval. Judson began the first verse.

A man whose name was Johnny Sands,
Had married Betty Hague,
And though she brought him gold and lands,
She prov'd a terrible plague,
For Oh! she was a scolding wife,
Full of caprice and whim.

He said that he was tired of life,
And she was tired of him,
And she was tired of him,
And she was tired of him,
And she was tired of him.

Judson continued the story, telling how Johnny Sands tied his hands so that he could not save himself and ordered Betty to push him into the river with all her might.

"Now stand up," she says, "upon the brink
And I'll prepare to run,
And I'll prepare to run.

All down the hill his loving bride,
Now ran with all her force
To push him in—
He stepped aside,
And she fell in, of course,
Now splashing, dashing like a fish.
“Oh, save me, Johnny Sands.”

“I can’t my dear, tho’ much I wish,
For you have tied my hands,
For you have tied my hands,
For you have tied my hands.”

Tears of laughter rolled as the audience forgot politics in the enjoyment of sheer nonsense. On the spur of the minute Judson selected *The Humbugged Husband* as an encore. He stepped once more to the edge of the wooden platform, leaned far over, and began in confident tones:

She’s not what fancy painted her,
I’m sadly taken in . . .

With a crash the platform splintered beneath him and he disappeared until only his head stuck ludicrously above the floor boards. Peals of laughter swept the hall, for the audience thought the accident was a part of the regular performance. A seasoned trouper, Judson struggled up and continued as if nothing had happened.

After the concert, the family, guided by Hale, who never strayed far from his charges for fear they might embarrass him with antislavery sentiments, attended a reception to meet prominent personages. Daniel Webster was there and, Asa noticed, took three glasses of champagne. J. R. Giddings of Ohio, whose countenance “beamed with love and humanity,” spoke so kindly that Judson rejoiced in the belief that “we are having a moral influence in this city.”

The last few days in Washington were crammed with sight-seeing, singing, and entertainment. Asa wandered through the Patent Office to see Washington’s sword and Franklin’s cane.

Whenever possible the troupe visited the House of Representatives, where they were often disgusted to hear proslavery arguments from some southern legislator. They spent an evening with Charles A. Wyckliffe, the postmaster general, and his family and were offered champagne, oranges, and chicken salad. The greatest thrill, however, came when Hale escorted them to the Supreme Court to hear Webster argue the celebrated case of *Vidal et al. v. Girard's Executors*.

The Hutchinsons fought their way through a crowd of men and more than two hundred ladies who "crowded, squeezed, and almost jammed into that little room," where "law and politeness, ogling and flirtation" flourished. The case centered about the curious provisions of Stephen Girard's will, which gave several million dollars to the city of Philadelphia for the founding of a college for poor, white, male orphans, with the unusual restriction that "no ecclesiastic, missionary, or minister, of any sect whatsoever" should ever be admitted within its premises. Asa was particularly anxious to hear attorneys for Girard's relatives attempt to break the will, for he and John had visited the institution when in Philadelphia. Then too, it was rumored that Webster, acting for the plaintiff, was to receive a fee of fifty thousand dollars if he won. That in itself was sensational.

Webster was at his best. His flowing oratory held the Hutchinsons spellbound. He contended that Girard's bequest was contrary to public policy because the school was opposed to the Christian religion. He pointed out that Christianity was the only true foundation of good conduct and that an educational institution based upon any other principles was only a building upon sand.

"I never heard such highfalutin speechmakin'!" said John Hutchinson, and he was surprised when the Court handed down a unanimous decision upholding the will.

Stimulated by close and intimate contacts with prominent politicians and with national affairs in the making, the Hutchinsons enjoyed every moment of their Washington sojourn. On

February 7, 1844, they presented their farewell concert at the Assembly Rooms. John Quincy Adams attended, and Asa said the hall was full of all sorts of people—"Farmers, Mechanics, Clergymen, Lawyers, Doctors, Senators, Representatives, Merchants, and Loafers."



After another concert or two in Baltimore on the way, the troupe returned to Philadelphia for a ten-day stay.

"Pears to me," said John, "that time goes faster here than most anywhere else."

Jesse looked up from his accounts. "We've been here five days and given two concerts. The first at the Philadelphia Museum brought in three hundred and fifty dollars and the next two hundred and thirty-seven dollars. That's makin' the mare trot."

"Land sakes! That's more than we made in Washington."

"Sure it is." Jesse flipped the ledger sheets rapidly. "I figure we ought to have close to four thousand dollars when we go home. But we're goin' to have to get some new songs. Folks'll be gettin' weary of the old numbers."

Abby laid aside her sewing. "It seems we just never have time any more to work on new songs. All our evenings are full. We could work tonight, but Daniel Neal's invited us to a party."

"Well, I want to go tonight. Neal's a good antislavery man, and I want to talk to him about my new emancipation song." Jesse blew gently on his last entry. "We better be gettin' ready."

Bright lights shone from the windows to reflect on heaps of glistening snow as the Hutchinsons, bundled in warm clothing, left an omnibus to clump up the steps. Inside Neal led them to the warmth of a roaring fire, where Charles and Gertrude Burleigh, prominent Philadelphia abolitionists, stretched chilled fingers to the heat. Near by stood a cheerful, energetic woman of middle age and two girls who looked much like their mother.

"This is Mrs. Lucretia Mott and her daughters," smiled

Neal. "I thought you should know one another. Mrs. Mott's a great abolitionist, but she's a mighty fine cook too."

It was a friendly, cozy evening. The Mott girls were charming, and their mother, a Hicksite Quaker, kept the conversation rolling with stories of her trip to England and her decision to leave the orthodox Quaker church and become a Hicksite, the group supporting abolition. Jesse sang verses from the emancipation song he was working on, and Neal encouraged him. By refreshment time the company was playing games and roaring with laughter at Mrs. Burleigh's barnyard imitations. Ten o'clock came all too soon. As the Hutchinsons left, Mrs. Mott called after them, "You should go to England too. Your songs would do much for the cause."

Only Asa was pleased when the Hutchinsons left Philadelphia for New York sooner than they had planned. Large profits, a whirlwind of social engagements, and a suggestion that they go to England worried him. "There is danger ahead," he wrote darkly. "We should be on watch constantly."

But there was no sign of trouble in New York. The troupe sang in Brooklyn for an audience of a thousand persons and fulfilled a contract at Niblo's Gardens that brought them five hundred dollars. Zephaniah and Andrew came down from Milford to help with the business details, for Jesse found himself too occupied with his new song to take tickets, arrange for rental of halls, visit printers to order handbills, and insert newspaper advertisements. The Hutchinson concerts were passing into the realm of big business.

By March 21, a dark, rainy day, Zephaniah had completed arrangements for a final New York concert at the Broadway Tabernacle. Long before he and Andrew took their places at the great door, a crowd was queued outside the building. More than fourteen hundred dollars were collected, and Zephaniah, rapidly computing expenses, estimated a new profit of a cool twelve hundred.

The quartet itself was nervous, waiting in the dingy dressing room for the audience to quiet. They were confident enough of

the success of the old tried-and-true favorites, but they were apprehensive about *Get Off the Track*, which Jess was introducing for the first time. Finally the signal came. After a few bars of introduction the bass viol and violins fell silent. More and more the Hutchinsons were singing a capella, and Jesse had insisted that his song be sung without accompaniment. Then the words came, set to the air of *Old Dan Tucker*, words that were to ring round the nation, words to be caught up in liberty and campaign songsters, words to be flung at the South for almost a quarter of a century.

Ho! the car Emancipation
Rides majestic thro' our Nation,
Bearing on its train the story,
Liberty! a nation's glory.

Then came the chorus.

Roll it along,
Roll it along,
Roll it along,
Thro' the Nation Freedom's Car,
Emancipation.
Roll it along,
Roll it along,
Roll it along,
Thro' the Nation Freedom's Car,
Emancipation.

The audience leaned forward, eager not to miss a single word of the dramatic verses.

Men of various predilections,
Frightened, run in all directions;
Merchants, Editors, Physicians,
Lawyers, Priests and Politicians.
Get out of the way! every station,
Clear the track! Emancipation.

Rail Roads to Emancipation
Cannot rest on *Clay* foundation

And the *tracks* of "The Magician"
Are but *Rail Roads* to perdition.

Pull up the Rails! Emancipation
Cannot rest on such foundation.

All true friends of Emancipation,
Haste to Freedom's Rail Road Station;
Quick into the Cars get seated,
All is ready and completed.

Put on the Steam! All are crying,
And the Liberty Flags are flying.

Hear the mighty car wheels humming!
Now look out! *The Engine's coming!*
Church and Statesmen! hear the thunder!
Clear the track! or you'll fall under.

Get off the track! all are singing,
While the *Liberty Bell* is ringing.

On triumphant, see them bearing,
Through sectarian rubbish tearing;
The' Bell and Whistle and the Steaming,
Startles thousands from their dreaming.

Look out for the cars! while the Bell rings,
Ere the sound your funeral knell rings.

See the people run to meet us;
At the Depots thousands greet us;
All take seats with exultation,
In the car Emancipation.

Huzza! Huzza! Emancipation
Soon will bless our happy nation.

Huzza! Huzza!! Huzza!!!

Thunderous applause swept up from the crowd, and Jesse knew his song was a success.

Get Off the Track was sung for the second time at an anti-slavery meeting in Salem, Massachusetts, on April 11, and the observant Asa entered the comment that it "went like wild fire." When Nathaniel P. Rogers, to whom Jesse dedicated the song as "a mark of esteem for his intrepidity in the cause of

Human Rights," heard the flaming words, he wrote in the *Herald of Freedom* for June 1844: "It represented the railroad in characters of living light and song, with all its terrible enginery and speed and danger. And when they came to the chorus-cry that gives name to the song—when they cried to the heedless pro-slavery multitude that were stupidly lingering on the track, and the engine 'Liberator' coming hard upon them, under full steam and all speed, the Liberty Bell loud ringing, and they standing like deaf men right in its whirlwind path, the way they cried 'Get Off the Track,' in defiance of all time and rule, was magnificent and sublime."

The day after the Tabernacle concert Jesse carried the manuscript to his old friend Hall, but the New York publisher refused to accept it, saying it was too inflammable, had "too short a fuse," and might boomerang on the firm.

"If Hall won't take it, I'm sure Ditson will," Jesse said a little tartly when he returned to the hotel. "We're goin' up to Boston in a few days, and I'll see him then."

As soon as the Hutchinsons were settled in Francis Jackson's home on Hollis Street, Jesse called on Ditson, but he too shook his head. "Why don't you try Henry Prentiss?" he suggested.

Prentiss was an umbrella maker who sold pianofortes and music and who occasionally printed songs that were rejected by Boston's first-class publishers. His shoddy shop at 33 Court Street was a jumble of umbrellas, melodeons, and sheet music, but Jesse soon learned that this grimy jack-of-many-trades really understood music.

"Here are the proof sheets of Mr. William C. Glynn's *Capitol Quick Step*," Prentiss shoved pages into Jesse's hands. "Blake is engraving a portrait of Henry Clay on horseback for a cover illustration. I expect the song to be out this year."

"I don't know anything about Blake," answered Jesse, "but I do know that Thayer does good work."

"I'll commission him for your cover illustration if you wish. I could get the song out within a few weeks. The terms are those of other publishers. Why not try me?"

A bargain was struck, and Jesse never regretted it. Prentiss, for all his reputation as a second-class publisher, did excellent work. He saw to it that Thayer drew an elaborate and detailed picture, showing the engine "Liberator" with its "Liberty" bell ringing and the car of "Immediate Emancipation" filled with passengers. And he priced the handsome song at only twenty-five cents. Jesse remembered that Ditson charged more than thirty cents for music with far less attractive covers.



The Hutchinsons' days were devoted to work. Jackson let them strictly alone, so that they were able each morning after breakfast to practice at the parlor piano. Judson usually bolted his food and was the first to run fingers over the keys. He liked to warm up with *From Greenland's Icy Mountains*, banging out the melody in noisy style until Abby would come running to bribe him into quietness with a piece of maple sugar snatched from the breakfast table. By the time he had crunched through his sweet, Asa and John were ready to practice *The Song of the Shirt* and *The Good Old Plow*.

Let them sing who may of the battle fray,
And the deeds that are long since past,
Let them chant in praise of the Tar, whose days
Are spent on the ocean vast.
I would render to these all the worship you please,
I would honor them even now,
But I'd give far more, from my heart's full core,
To the cause of the good old plow.

From time to time they sought to relax during practice by taking turns reading aloud from Richard Hildreth's *The Slave, or Memories of Archy Moore*, a stimulating antislavery volume. Generally afternoons were spent calling upon friends, entertaining guests, shopping, or tossing ball. Brother Andrew had given them three balls with which they played a silly little game that afforded them great delight. They counted how many times they could throw and catch the balls without smiling!

Usually they rested after their exercise, took a light supper, and then went to the concert hall. When they returned, they ate a late snack of apple pie, maple molasses, cheese, and crackers. Then their diaries were brought up to date. "I eat some meat," wrote John. "I don't go Grahamism as I did once on a time. But I think I might if I could live at my New Hampshire home where I could have apple and pumpkin pies, a plenty of fruit, and good, clear water."

As April turned softly into the freshness of May, the troupe left Boston for an excursion to New Haven and then traveled on to Milford to spend the summer with their parents.

Milford looked as it always had. Spring freshets gave sparkle to the Souhegan, and violets carpeted its banks. But Polly was thin and worried. Old Jesse had left the farm to live in Milford, she told them. He and Joshua were bent on remodeling an old store and setting up in business. And he had taken to preaching in the old red schoolhouse where the boys had gone to school. He was showing little interest in his home.

That night Asa tossed restlessly on his straw tick. Finally he got up, found his diary, and made a brief entry: "Was glad to be home, but sorry to find so much discord among the family." The next morning he planted potatoes west of the barn, and in the afternoon, warm and springlike, he drove to town to caution his father not to spend too much money in repairing an old store. He learned that there were "many stories" going the rounds regarding the Hutchinsons and went home low in spirits.

After much coaxing by everyone, Father Jesse consented to come home, but his presence only created greater disturbance. The root of all the bickering was money. The farming Hutchinsons were jealous of the financial successes of their singing brothers and sister. They too wanted to go out giving concerts. Asa thought this would be all right. "I go for the greatest good to the greatest number," he said. "Music has charms that ought to be cultivated for good purposes, for reform, and to help the weary traveler on toward Heaven." But John, Judson, and

young Jesse disagreed. They objected violently to the idea of a competing Hutchinson troupe on the road. Then, said Benjamin and Joshua, if the rest of them couldn't go singing, the quartet and young Jesse ought to give up their shares in the old homestead. The troupe couldn't see why, since they contributed from their earnings to the family purse.

Day after day the quarrel continued, with old Jesse citing irrelevant Bible verses and threatening to return to the village to live. After supper one evening Judson and John quarreled so violently that Jud had a fit of the "unmanageable horrors." He cried and yelled until his face was crimson. "This house is a house of grief and crying," Asa told his diary.

Polly grew more nervous daily. Even the gift of new carpets, bought in Boston, failed to soothe her. The best sedative, Asa found, was to take her for an early afternoon ride in the carry-all while Abby and Rhoda washed the dinner dishes and put the house to rights. Polly enjoyed these jaunts and liked to stop along the way to dig ferns for her rocky garden at home.

During June the quartet left home for a short time to sing at an antislavery meeting in Boston, and in July Francis Jackson and William Lloyd Garrison spent a few days with them at the Milford home. Picnics, fishing, and a family excursion to the White Mountains occupied the late summer. In September the troupe made an extended tour through New England, but their hearts were heavy within them, and their profits were not as great as they had expected. One day Judson drew pad and pencil to him. His bold strokes outlined two coffins, broad at the shoulders and narrow at the feet. "There's evil waitin' fer us," he said.

The tragedy struck in December 1844, on the eve of the holiday season. Isaac died on the twenty-second, and Benjamin followed him the next day. In an upstairs bedroom lay John's first child, Henry, born five days before Isaac died.

"This is a house of two coffins and a cradle," wrote Asa. No further mention was made of competing family troupes, and old Jesse forgot his dreams of a business in the village.

Everybody's Talkin'

THROUGHOUT the winter white snow blanketed the common grave of Benjamin and Isaac. Each day Abby, muffled against the cold, made a pilgrimage to sweep with mittened hands the drifts from the granite slab and to leave a spray of evergreen tied with red yarn. As she stood where so many of her ancestors slept, leaden skies pressed closer and closer until it seemed only she and a grave were left in a great gray world.

Her lethargy was shared by the household. For weeks music lay helter-skelter in the boys' rooms, and the keys of the melodeon gathered dust. But not even death and winter could stop daily work on the farm. Polly and Rhoda cooked and dusted and mended, and the men patched harness, cut and piled wood, and, when all else failed, tinkered dispiritedly in the tool shed. Asa, his big back bulging, turned the old grinder's wheel that Grandfather Leavitt had bought thirty years earlier, and Jud laid blades against its surface until every kitchen knife was keener than a straightedge razor. Once a week they trudged to Milford for supplies, returning late in the gloom of afternoon with salt, a bag of corn meal, and tea.

By then the house on the hill shot gleams of yellow light from a brass lamp that Polly always set in the parlor window to throw its rays of welcome across glittering snow. Supper over and the kitchen tidied, the Hutchinsons sat talking for an hour or so before climbing the stairs to rooms so chill that the water in the china basins filmed with ice.

The concert stage seemed far away on such evenings. Even Judson was unperturbed when he read in the sarcastic *Musical Chronical*: "The Hutchinson Family we are *very* happy to hear

will remain in their mountain home, somewhere down East." He only lowered the paper gently and marked the item with bold, deliberate strokes. "We'll be goin' back one of these days. Ben would have wanted us to."

"Yes, I guess so," said John. "And this time we can go without fearin' lack of cash at home. There's about four thousand dollars buried in the old shot bag, so father can dig up any amount he wants whenever he needs it. Some folks may be wantin' us to sing fer the annexation of Texas."

"If we don't get Texas purty soon, England will." Asa fumbled through a pile of *Niles' National Register*, a paper he had come to know in Baltimore. Before leaving that city he had called on Jeremiah Hughes, the editor, and had given him five dollars for a year's subscription. It was the only journal that came to the farm, and Asa read each issue with meticulous attention. "A doctor named Bennett says a German emigrating company has come into Texas with thirty-one princes and counts. And there's dozens more Englishmen than Americans there. Listen to this: 'There can be no doubt but that England is at the bottom of this matter. Should the annexation question be long delayed, may not the government pass out of our hands and that matter forever fail?' That fellow knows what he's talkin' about."

"Andy Jackson is all fer it," put in Judson heatedly. "An' what Andy sez is good enough fer me!" He banged his fist hard on the table.

"Don't go spillin' the salt now, Jud, or we'll be a-havin' more hard luck. Texas ain't goin' to be annexed tonight. It's a long ways from the Souhegan to the Rio Grande." John smiled at Judson's excitement. "But it's a cinch we don't want slavery down there. Jesse's emancipation song fits Texas, annexed or not, as well as South Carolina."

Asa, waving his newspaper, wouldn't let the matter drop. "The Quakers in New York and Vermont say that annexation would extend slavery and end in war. What do you think of that?"

"I dunno," said John slowly. "We'll have to wait an' see. Jess is comin' up from Lynn tomorrow, an' we'll talk to him."

But the energetic Jesse brought news that drove all thought of Texas out of mind. He announced proudly that he was buying historic Old High Rock on the outskirts of Lynn for a family home.

Nothing could have pleased the Hutchinsons more or dispelled their melancholy more swiftly. They had long known and loved the beauty of High Rock, a range of rocky ledges that lay only about nine miles from Boston and four from Nahant. From its summit a sweeping panorama of beach and sea spread out beyond Egg Rock, like a blunted wedge, to merge with the far horizon. Enthusiastically Jesse recalled its history.

"Long ago it was the home of Moll Pitcher, New England's greatest fortuneteller. Nobody knows where she came from. Marblehead maybe, or Essex. She lived in a wretched hovel at the base of the cliff. Remember how Whittier described her?

A wasted, gray, and meagre hag,
In features evil as her lot.
She had the crooked nose of a witch,
And a crooked back and chin;
And in her gait she had a hitch,
And in her hand she carried a switch,
To aid her work of sin,—
A twig of wizard hazel, which
Had grown beside a haunted ditch,
Where a mother her nameless babe had thrown
To the running water and merciless stone."

Abby's eyes were wide with interest. This story wasn't good for her, John thought. Since Benjamin's death she had grown more and more interested in spiritualism, and she and Judson were both dabbling in the occult and in phrenology. John didn't like it.

Jesse went on with his story. "Moll lived at High Rock until she died. In 1813, I think it was, when she was seventy-five.

Up till the devil snatched her last breath and got what was due him, she stirred her magic brews, read the lines on beach sands, and during storms paced the graveyard, shouting directions to sailors at sea. They swore they heard her above the cracking of the canvas and so brought their sailing ships safely to harbor."

When Jesse stopped, the room was heavy with an unearthly silence, full of fear. Then the doorknob rattled in the wind, and Judson screamed.

"They're here. The spirits are here. Ben and Isaac want in!" He flung the door wide, lurching out into the snowdrifts and sobbing like a frightened child.

John brought him back to the warmth of the kitchen and soothed him until the fire went out of his eyes and he was quiet once more. Then John put him to bed, fastening blankets around him with clamps.

"You've got to stop talkin' the spirit world to Jud, Abby," he declared angrily when he came back.

Abby burst into tears and crept to her room. Polly made as if to follow her, but then sank wearily into her ladder-back chair. Old Jesse just sniffled, wiping his nose with the back of a hand. John thought he hated them all. There's a streak of madness somewhere in this family, he told himself. Nothing ever goes right. Jess's children all die, Jud has the horrors, father is tight-strung, we act queer in the village, and now Abby's foolin' with the spirits. One of us is going to end up in a mad-house yet.



As February 1845 was blown away by the winds of March, John prepared to take the troupe to New York. He had decided that part of what ailed Abby and Judson was too long a confinement in the old farmhouse. Another concert tour would at least put an end to Abby's daily trips to the graveyard, where she said she was beginning to get in touch with Benjamin's

spirit. John had his share of superstitions, but he would have no truck with spiritualism.

On March 12 the troupe sang at Providence and then went directly to New York, arriving there, said the *Tribune*, in "fine health and spirits."

Almost immediately Asa picked up a copy of George W. Clark's *Liberty Minstrel* to find in this famous abolitionist songster two of Jesse's songs—*The Bereaved Slave Mother* and *Get Off the Track*. Dedicated to the true friends of universal freedom, the collection included also Whittier's *Gone, Sold, and Gone*; Lowell's *Are Ye Truly Free?*; Longfellow's *The Quadroon Maiden*. These, and more too, were to be sung again and again before the ladies of Charleston, watching from advantageous rooftops, saw the Stars and Stripes flutter down from over Fort Sumter. The Hutchinsons liked Clark's selections, and John purchased a second copy against the day when the first wore out. They used it until after the Civil War.

All New York seemed agog over the annexation of Texas. In the Marlborough House bitter discussion echoed through the parlor and around the hotel's vegetarian table. Opinion was sharp enough before Congress passed its annexation resolution with the provision that new states were to be carved from the vast Lone Star empire "with or without slavery, as the people of each state asking admission may desire." This appeal to popular choice only intensified the antagonism between slavery and abolitionist groups. The Hutchinsons allied themselves with lawmakers in the lower house of the Massachusetts legislature, men who said firmly that Texas could be admitted to the Union only on the basis of perfect equality of free men.

Armed with Clark's songster and fortified by Jesse's *Get Off the Track*, the troupe, regardless of consequences, continued to strike hard for "the brotherhood of man" in all their concerts. Texas became for them a personal issue that must be won regardless of loss of popularity.

Reaction was immediate and about evenly divided. The day

following their first concert, sung in Niblo's Gardens, both the *Express* and the *Commercial Advertiser* attacked the troupe for singing such songs "as must be highly offensive to a New York audience" and for trifling with their well-earned reputation by emphasizing their private opinions on a disputed political point.

Such editorial abuse ruffled the Hutchinsons little. They discounted it as the ravings of a selfish group dedicated to the thwarting of human progress. What did cut was criticism of their ability to sing. John was enraged when he read in the *Herald* that their program consisted of a long list of songs of which few possessed merit, and "those which raise themselves above mediocrity are spoiled through an arrangement which even an apparent necessity cannot excuse." And when he read further that the comic songs were "soporific, and one or two of them would make an excellent article of exportation to China instead of opium," his anger was unbounded.

"Asa," he shouted, "they're afraid of real American music. All they want is operatic tra-la-la!"

"I don't believe it." Asa clipped the offensive notices and slipped them between the leaves of his journal. "You know, John, there's two opinions about everything. Our voices are different and our songs are too. We've been singin' only about three years, an' we've done tarnal well. We've had some bad notices, but we're makin' more money all the time. At least the papers take notice of us. That's a lot!"

The troupe were not permitted to forget the storm raised by their abolitionist tendencies. Within a week papers in New York, Philadelphia, and Boston had taken sides in the controversy. The Hutchinsons had only to select their journals to find themselves utterly damned as meddling propagandists or extravagantly praised as the champions of reform and the friends of mankind. The *Utica Gazette* sputtered that the Hutchinsons "have more music than manners." Jesse's wife sent him a copy of the *Lynn Pioneer*, whose editor charged that the New York *Express* was seeking to break up the Hutchinson

concerts with a mob and to gain for itself proslavery subscribers.

"Listen to this," said Jesse the evening of the second concert at Niblo's. Spreading the *Pioneer* on the bed, he read aloud: "It should be recorded to the infinite credit of the Hutchinsons, that, from the beginning of their career to the present hour, through good report and evil report, they have always adhered, with intrepid fidelity, to the free principles which they brought with them from their mountain home. And I am certain that when their pecuniary success as singers depends upon their pro-slavery subserviency as moral beings—they will retire to their native hills, and there in the green pastures of Milford and by side of the still waters of the Souhegan, enter with renewed zeal upon their elevating labors, healthful exercise, and simple enjoyments of pastoral life. Shame on any human being who would have such noble gifts laid upon the altar of despotism and offered up as a sacrifice to Belial.'"

Judson laughed so hard he seemed on the verge of the horrors. "We couldn't go back to Milford if we wanted to. All this fightin' is just what we need."

When John looked puzzled, Jud explained. "Look," he said, "Jess pays money for advertisements in all the papers, but nobody reads 'em much. Now every paper in New York is talkin' about us and everybody else, and it doesn't cost a copper. They'll flock to concerts now. Why, this mornin' the clerk showed me the Cincinnati *Chronicle*. It said we'd always be welcome there!"

He was right. Everybody was talking about the Hutchinsons, and newspapers kept the controversy alive through March and into April. Huge audiences night after night jammed Palmo's Opera House, Rutgers' Institute, or the Musical Fund Hall. Interest in their music increased as people fought to fill the auditoriums, and long lines stood outside for an hour before the doors opened. Within, the aisles were blocked, "principally for gentlemen, who voluntarily gave up their seats to the ladies from the first."

"See, John," cried Abby, thrusting the paper at him, "you were wrong. Folks do like us. We're getting better notices than the famous orchestra leader, Michele Rapetti, and the paper says our songs will please nine out of ten better than all the Italian music ever written."

"Everybody's talkin', everybody's talkin', everybody's talkin'," sang John, with a double shuffle and a flourish. "Everybody's talkin' about the Hutchinsons!"



It was an established principle with the Hutchinsons to give generously of their talents to the unfortunate. For years they admitted cripples and the infirm free of charge to their concerts. So they willingly accepted an invitation from Mrs. E. W. Farnham, the matron, to sing at Sing Sing on April 20.

New York's prison looked grim and gray when the troupe passed through its heavy gates. They stopped first in the male quarters to sing in the chapel at funeral services for two convicts. Abby, superstitious as always, whispered that this was a bad sign. The bare chapel contrasted sharply with the ornamental interior of Palmo's Opera House, and instead of tier upon tier of fashionable gentlemen and ladies, there sat row after row of dejected prisoners come to say farewell to two who had shared common cells and eaten of the same coarse fare. Jesse planned the program with great care, choosing old spirituals and hymns of strength and forgiveness.

On the women's side of the prison the Hutchinsons varied the selections by including *My Mother's Bible*. It brought tears to the girls because it gave them, said the matron, "a picture of domestic peace, holiness, and virtue." Afterward the wardens and matrons crowded around to wring the singers' hands with deep appreciation and to say, again and again, that many a lonely heart in a stone cell was beating more warmly because of the sincere, sweet music.

But when they returned to New York to sing once more

before going to Boston, they were astonished to find the *Courier and Enquirer* growling that prisoners were not sent to Sing Sing to be entertained and pampered with "elegant enjoyments and refined pleasures."

The troupe's last Gotham evening, like several previous evenings, was spent with G. P. Morris, the song writer, and Mrs. Lydia Maria Child, who was still fighting valiantly for abolition. The conversation centered about Texas and slavery. Asa was now sponsoring annexation with or without slavery.

"I tell you," he declared vigorously, "we ought to get Texas before England does and . . ."

"And increase mankind's misery by adding more slave territory," interrupted Mrs. Child.

Asa looked baffled. "I know it sounds bad," he admitted, "but I don't see any other way out. I'm as strong an abolitionist as any of you. But it 'pears to me that annexation is more important right now than the slave question."

"There's nothing more important right now than the slave question." Jesse was short about it.

Asa stuck to his guns. "I think there is. Even if Texas comes in as a slave state, we can fight within the Union for freedom. If Texas goes to England, we'll never have a chance." He thought a moment. "Slavery is on the way out anyway. Time is on our side, and I think the South, if given a chance to get out gracefully, would abandon the institution."

"You talk like Pennsylvania's Buchanan," said Morris smoothly.

"Or like a southern planter," added Abby.

"I don't talk like a senator, and I don't think like a planter. I'm a New Hampshire man. I'm a friend of Garrison and a friend of man. But I can't see going to war over slavery and makin' what's miserable more terrible."

Mrs. Child leaned forward. "That's what a lot of Quakers say, but war's coming sooner or later. Maybe with England, maybe with Mexico, and perhaps among ourselves." She

sighed. "After the Webster-Hayne debates South Carolina just laid aside nullification to use again someday. And if Texas comes in slave, it will be a great encouragement to the nullification party. That's what I think."

Asa was impressed. "You mean you don't want Texas in the Union?"

"I didn't say that. I think Texas is coming in, and I think it is coming as a slave state. There'll be fighting sooner or later. The slavery issue won't be settled this year or next. It's in the Union's veins and bloodletting is the only remedy."

"I see that a Susan Yates was arrested in St. Louis for helping slaves to escape to Canada," said Morris.

"Only about a month ago a court in Lexington, Kentucky, sentenced an abolitionist to fifteen years for aiding slaves. It all adds up to what I said—war." Mrs. Child was positive.

"What can be done?" asked Judson.

Mrs. Child smiled. "We can just keep on praying and editing and writing songs and singing until people everywhere, North and South, decide to stamp slavery out." Getting up, she smoothed her dress and went over to the melodeon. The evenings the group spent together always ended with music.

Judson tuned his fiddle, then began Elizur Wright's *The Fugitive Slave to the Christian*:

The fetters galled my weary soul,—
A soul that seemed but thrown away;
I spurned the tyrant's base control,
Resolved at last the man to play:
The hounds are baying on my track,
O Christian! will you send me back?

I seek a home where man is man,
If such there be upon this earth,
To draw my kindred, if I can,
Around its free, though humble hearth.
The hounds are baying on my track,
O Christian! will you send me back?

The next day the *Chronicle* welcomed the Hutchinsons to Boston, saying: "Our Yankee singers arrived in town on Friday night and will sing at the Melodeon on Monday evening. Their farewell at New York was a rouser—the Tabernacle being jammed, and hundreds unable to find entrance. They had a real struggle at first to withstand the mob spirit that had been evoked by several of the Whig papers on account of their singing the Car of Emancipation; but the New Hampshire boys stood their ground, without the slightest wavering, and thus carried the town. It was a noble triumph, and we owe them a hearty welcome in Boston."

Boston, as always, showered them with attention, and they loved the town for it. The ground beneath their feet seemed to breathe liberty, and on every corner stood monuments symbolic of American independence. Francis Jackson's house was a second home to each of them, and not too far away were Lynn and Old High Rock, which Jesse was preparing for a family home. They talked politics with Jackson, spent mornings in rehearsal, and from time to time loafed in Ditson's music store, where they rummaged through old song sheets and tried out new compositions to the delight of the customers. One morning Ditson quizzed John about the future plans of the troupe.

"Abby and Asa's thinkin' of goin' to school a spell at Hancock. They're young, and could stand a mite more schoolin'. An' Jesse will work at Old High Rock," said John.

"But what about you and Mr. Judson?" asked Ditson persistently.

"Why, we're aimin' to live on the farm and get caught up with our chores."

"I heard somewhere that the Hutchinsons were going out into the Iowa country, now that there's a bill up for statehood. Maybe even farther West. Oregon perhaps?"

"Maybe." John was little inclined to divulge family plans. But Ditson paid no heed.

"Well," he continued, "I wouldn't want to go West. It's

pretty wild country—Indians and all. Why, I read the other day that at Independence, Missouri, the wagon trains stretch miles in length. Think of it, people live in those covered vehicles like they do at home. Women carpet the wagon floors, set in a chair or two, add a bureau and a mirror, and they've got a regular prairie boudoir."

"We've thought some of goin' to England," said John grudgingly.

"That's an idea!" Ditson slapped a leg. "That artist Audubon who's published pictures of a lot of birds out West—he went to England. Everybody's going to England now." He laughed. "A few years ago George Catlin took a pack of Indians and two grizzly bears over to exhibit them, and Tom Thumb is there right now. He's a queer one, he is. They say Queen Victoria gave him a midget cardcase, and he packs his entire wardrobe in a hatbox, sleeps in a bureau drawer, and houses his carriage under a table."

"I met him once at Barnum's." John rose to go.

"You don't say. Well, if you went over there now, Tom and the Hutchinsons could travel together."

"He's in Paris," said John and fled.

Despite his irritation with the talkative Ditson, he was intrigued. He remembered that in Philadelphia Mrs. Mott had suggested a foreign tour. It's been difficult enough, he thought, to get away from home to sing in the United States. What would father say to our leaving the country? He shrugged the thought away and went home to prepare for the final Boston concert.

When the troupe arrived at the Melodeon shortly before eight, the hall already was packed with admirers, who clapped and cheered as the family filed upon the stage. And long after the last stanzas of the final song died away, the crowd continued its noisy enthusiasm.

Press comments reflected the same hearty approval. "We really know not which of the four singers most to admire," wrote one editor, and Asa marked the passage. "Each seems

PREPARATION.

PART I. QUARTETTE.

WE ARE HAPPY AND FREE.

Subject from Reiner—Hutchinson.

QUARTETTE.

THE MEAN HARVEST TIME.

THE SNOW STORM.

This song is founded on fact—description of the sufferings of a woman while her husband was in the snow storm. The mother, too, becoming weary, faint, and cold, at last sank down up to it a snow, and after struggling vainly, she yielded up to it. The bodies were discovered floating in the lake, and the mother's body was found in the snow. The mother's body was found in the snow, and the father's body was found in the snow. He immediately carried it to a dwelling house, and it was preserved.

The wild winds swept the mountain's height,
And pathless was the dreary wild,
While 'mid the cheerless hours of night
A mother wandered with her child,
A shroud she drew around her breast,
The babe was sleeping on her breast!

MY MOTHER'S BIBLE.

WORDS BY G. F. MORRIS, ESQ.

Thou book, at all times, be to me now—
Tears will unbidden start;
With telling of my dear mother's love,
I press it to my heart.
For many generations past,
My mother's hand this bible clasped,
She gave it me.

My father read this holy book,
To brother, sister, dear,
How calm as my poor mother's look,
How full of God's word to hear.

My mother's hand it was,
When she gave it to me,
Again that little group is met,
Within the halls of home.

PART II.

SLIGHTING SONG.

Away we go over ice and snow,
As the cheerful music swells,
And the woodland glen resounds again
To the merry, merry bells; ha, ha!

QUARTETTE.

THE GUY WHERE WE WERE BORN.

We stood upon the mountain height,
And viewed the valleys o'er;
The sun was gay, the mellow light,
In and the flowers were in bloom;
We gazed with rapture on the scene,
Where first in youth's bright morn,
We played where now we stood serene,
The 'Guy where we were born.

TRIO.

ROCKAWAY.

WORDS BY HENRY JOHN SHANPE—MELODY BY RUSSELL

On still Long Island's sea-girt shore,
Many an hour I've whited away,
In listening to the breakers roar,
That washed the beach at Rockaway.

QUARTETTE.

THE BEREAVED SLAVE MOTHER.

necessary to the other. What could they do without the fun, and good humor, and arch roguery of Judson, equally seen, whether he is singing the inimitable 'Calomel' or bowing most graciously to the quarter whence came the hisses from a few 'persons of the baser sort,' at the 'Song for Emancipation.' As for Abby, we know not which most to admire—the richness and sweetness of her voice, or her perfectly easy, simple, unaffected manner—or her modest and tasteful costume. We would give the gold pen with which we are now writing to hear her sing the 'Queen of May' again. As to power and compass of voice, who could excel John? These qualities were strikingly evidenced in that touching and grand Indian song, the notes of which touched the very deepest chords of the soul. His humor, too, though of a different kind from Judson's, is almost as irresistible. Old Heraclitus himself would have shook his sides at 'Small Potatoes.' But then who but Judson could breathe out that distant cry, 'far up the height—Excelsior'? And who but Asa could declare so positively and in such a tone, that he would 'have no wife at all.'"

Encouraged and delighted, the Hutchinsons went on their way, stopping to sing one concert in Lynn and then moving on to Milford the first week in May 1845. John hugged his infant son, and Judson's spirits soared to be with his beloved Jerusha. On the fourteenth a daughter, Kate Louisa, was born to her. Once more Grandfather Leavitt held an infant for baptism and Polly was the adoring grandmother.

The month passed swiftly. The elder Jesse, masterful as ever, rose at dawn each morning to lay out chores for the boys. After a verse from the Bible and breakfast, they scattered to furrow rocky fields, plant, and cultivate. From time to time young Jesse came up from Lynn to give glowing accounts of the remodeling at Old High Rock. Music was forgotten until a copy of the *Herald of Freedom*, addressed in Nathaniel P. Rogers' hand, reached them.

It contained a curiously oblique invitation for the troupe to attend an antislavery convention in Concord on June 4. "I am

hoping," wrote Rogers, "to meet and hear once again at our gathering, *first Wednesday in June*,—Humanity's quire. I do not invite them. I only hope I shall meet them, and I think I may encourage the people to expect them at that time. If they do, the people will be here. The people want to hear the Hutchinsons, because they are of the people and are the people's own singers. The working people's singers. The Hutchinsons are working people. Those hands that can so 'handle the harp and the organ,' can play skillfully on the great and glorious plough handle, the majestic hoe, and the mighty ax helve."

"Never strummed a harp in my life," muttered Judson.

John looked at his hands, red and rough and already showing calluses. "What's the matter with Rogers anyway? He talks too fancy. Garrison says straight out what he means."

"Pa will be mighty put out if we up and leave now to go singin'."

John nodded. "I know, but we wouldn't be gone more than a few days."



Father Jesse grumbled disagreeably but he let them go. The entire trip to Concord was unpleasant. Abolitionist leaders disagreed about party organization and split wide over the management of the *Herald of Freedom*, with Parker Pillsbury intimating that Rogers was diverting funds to his own use. In addition, Garrison was opposed to Rogers' loose and informal manner of conducting meetings without a chairman and with any man rising to speak whenever he felt the oratorical urge. When tempers grew too hot, the Hutchinsons sang to soothe, but their efforts were unsuccessful. The convention replaced Rogers with Pillsbury. A few months later Rogers started an opposition paper to the *Herald of Freedom*, but his spirit was broken and he lived only a few years longer.

"You know, Jud," said John on the way home, "I'm getting tired of these squabbles—mighty sick and tired."

"I was a-thinkin' the same myself." Judson had been in-

creasingly irritable of late. His small daughter was sickly with the summer complaint, and living at home always irked him.

"What would you think of a western tour?"

"A western tour?" Judson let the idea seep in slowly. "You mean Pennsylvania and thereabouts?"

"Nope, I mean the Far West. Ioway." John rolled the word on his tongue. "An' there's folks goin' farther'n that. Wagon trains from Independence to the Platte and on over the great American desert to the Oregon country. This country's powerful big. There's a young army officer explorin' out that way now. Fremont his name is. I saw mention of it in Asa's paper."

Judson's face broke at the corners. A wide smile came swiftly and was gone. "What would Pa say?"

John ignored the question. "Folks are movin' everywhere. There's enough land for everybody, and it 'pears to me everybody's headin' West. They're hurryin' in to Wisconsin, and some of 'em got their eye on California. They'd like our music."

"Pa would never let us do it. An' mother wouldn't want Abby to go. Ain't there Indians out there?"

"I guess so." John's enthusiasm oozed away. Hesitantly he offered another suggestion. "Do you suppose Pa would let us go to England?"

"Now that's a clinker!"

Delighted by Judson's response, John talked fast. "It's an easy trip these days on fast steamers runnin' out of Boston to Liverpool. We've got more'n enough money in the shot bag. And the trip wouldn't be too hard on Abby, like ridin' in a prairie wagon would. Just think of singin' in big cities like London and Liverpool. Maybe we could even go to Scotland. Just think of the Hutchinsons abroad."

"I be," said Jud. "Let's talk to Jess 'bout it."

But when Jesse next came up from Lynn to report progress at Old High Rock, Judson had lost his enthusiasm for the English tour and would not even speak of it. Jesse was all in favor of the idea, but even his enthusiasm broke on the rock of Jud's disinterest, and the project seemed to die.

In July, a sweltering month that curled green leaves into shriveled little knots, farm work slackened. Abby and Asa had carried out their notion of going to school at Hancock, and John and Judson found time to bathe in the Souhegan's deep pools and cast their lines in Purgatory Pond. Evenings, after the sun rode down behind the purple haze of the hills, John carried the melodeon into the open to play songs of yesterday. Judson usually sat quietly at first, his feet beating out the rhythms on a granite slab, but before long he would edge John from the bench. From the old *United States Songster*, sent up from Boston before the troupe went on its first tour in the old carryall, he selected folk tunes and comic ditties describing the American scene.

Then suddenly one evening Judson began to play and sing all the Scottish numbers he could find, and for weeks John heard *Comin' Through the Rye*, *Hey the Bonnie Breast-knots*, and *Let Us Haste to Kelvin Grove* until he thought he would go mad. Finally the explanation of this sudden interest in the songs of Scotland dawned on him: This was Jud's way of indicating that once more he was ready to consider a trip to England and Scotland. But John said nothing. He saw no use in opening the question again with Asa and Abby away at school and no immediate prospect for travel in sight.

After a while Judson resumed his interest in the occult. This time, however, he turned more to phrenology than to spiritualism. His table was littered with tracts, diagrams, and a plaster phrenological bust that he had purchased from Fowler and Wells in New York for a dollar and twenty-five cents. Judson pored over these until John objected.

"What is all this stuff?" he asked one evening, watching Jud hold a copy of the *American Phrenological Journal and Miscellany* in one hand and feel his head with the other.

Jud carefully marked his place before he laid the magazine down. "Well," he said, "I don't rightly know, but each bump on your head tells something about your characteristics."

"I don't have any bumps on my head, except the one where

the ax handle hit me when I was playin' in the woodpile years ago."

"You look at the bust, John, and you'll see what I mean. Now Fowler says the animal propensities of man—irritability, profligacy, destructiveness, and selfishness—are located at the sides of the head and around and between the ears. I jut out there some. I guess that's what makes me get so cross at times."

"Look here, Jud, you don't believe that, do you?"

"Why not? It's the new science. Comes from some big men in Germany and England. Even doctors use it to tell what's wrong with patients, and lawyers can tell whether a fellow's guilty or innocent."

John sighed. "Well, it doesn't gee with me."

Judson looked annoyed. "It's right, I tell you. Why, even your hands tell a lot." He pawed through his magazines filled with garish anatomical charts. "Here it is. It says: 'Above all, do not marry a soft and delicate hand; for, soft hands necessarily accompany soft brains, and a mind too soft to be sensible; because the whole organization, mental and physical, partakes of one and the same character; so that a soft, pliable, yielding, delicate hand indicates a predominance of the same characteristic throughout. Such may do for a parlor toy, but not for a wife or a mother.'"

"I don't believe it. When I married Fanny she had soft hands." John stalked out, slamming the door.

When Asa and Abby returned from school, Judson had no difficulty interesting his sister, but Asa, like John, would have nothing of phrenology. Curiously enough, the elder Jesse expressed enthusiasm, fumbling his way through pages of unpronounceable text and staring into a mirror for long minutes. Even gullible Abby smiled at her father's preoccupation with his skull.

Fuming at such silliness, John began thinking and talking once more about a tour abroad. And in early August circumstances came to his aid in bringing it about.

Long-Tailed Yankees Abroad

IN A steerage cabin on the *Cambria*, a Cunard liner bound from Boston to Liverpool, a thick-set man with heavy shoulders sat writing. "I would rather trust my liberties with the English government than with the American rabble." His story finished, he folded the paper, set a cap atop a thatch of wiry black hair, and went up on deck to join the crowd of passengers, including a scattering of New Orleans cotton merchants and Georgia planters.

"Yes, suh. That's Frederick Douglass all right," muttered an outraged planter. "A runaway slave, an' a real troublemaker!"

"Those nigger-lovin' Hutchinsons put him up to this. He's had truck with Garrison and that other abolitionist who's on board. James N. Buffum's his name—from Lynn, Massachusetts."

The Hutchinsons' presence on board the *Cambria* was the result of a chance meeting in Lynn, early in August 1845, with Douglass and Buffum, who announced that they were sailing for England on the sixteenth in order to spread the antislavery gospel. When John had been talking so long about going to England, this seemed too good an opportunity to miss, and the Hutchinsons readily agreed to go along and help the cause; nor did they overlook the profits that might accrue from concerts in England. They knew their fame already had reached foreign shores. So they raised two thousand dollars and embarked for England, to champion equal suffrage, emancipation, and teetotaling. "Their love of purity," commented the friendly Manchester *Times*, "their energetic denunciations of slavery, their earnest advocacy of the rights of the poor, these are the themes on which they dwell with thrilling delight."

Flanked by the Hutchinsons, in sea jackets and Scottish caps,

the ex-slave Douglass was describing the torments of slavery and telling the story of his escape via the Underground Railroad. Half through the narrative, which he had laboriously written in steerage after being denied a first-class cabin, he was interrupted. Slaveowners hissed, then with raised canes and clenched fists closed around him.

An angry ship's captain, his nap disturbed by the brawling, shouted for a bosun to bring irons. This put an end to the disturbance, and Douglass scurried below deck to write in his journal: "They threatened to throw me overboard, and but for the firmness of Captain Judkins, probably would have (under the inspiration of *slavery* and *brandy*) attempted to put their threats into execution."

"I was once the owner of two hundred slaves," Captain Judkins remarked to the Hutchinsons, "but the government of Great Britain liberated them, and I am glad of it." Thus encouraged, the brothers—in a vain hope that music would soothe inflamed opinions—sang *God Save the Queen*, *Yankee Doodle*, *America*, and *A Life on the Ocean Wave*. John said later that he was more prejudiced than ever by the supercilious airs of the "scions of southern aristocracy" aboard the *Cambria*. No doubt the antagonism was mutual.



In long-tailed coats, broad collars, and beaver hats, the Hutchinson brothers marched ashore at Liverpool. They were Yankees from a "place of applesauce and greens, a paradise of pumpkin pies, a land of pork and beans," and they looked and acted Yankee. Only Abby was attired in anything akin to English fashion. And when they sat at table in their boardinghouse, they commented audibly upon the Southdown mutton, insisted upon molasses instead of treacle, and sneaked their beverages upstairs to determine if they were laced with the "Fiendish Reaper."

These odd ways did not endear them to their English hosts, so that John sadly admitted: "We soon realized that popularity

in our own country gave us little fame here, and that we must begin over again and sing our way into public favor, and thus overcome the prejudice we found existing against Yankee talent."

They curried English favor by bobbing their long coattails and appearing in suits cut Continental fashion, and one evening they sat through a concert by the Disston Family, to learn, if possible, what music tickled English taste. Then Abby and Judson arranged a program which John and Asa approved.

Their first performance was scheduled, after several disappointments, for the evening of September 10 in the concert hall of the Liverpool Mechanics Institute. John stepped on the stage, he said, with trembling knees. But after the first song, *The Pirate's Glee, or Blow On*, a thunder of spontaneous applause greeted the troupe and their confidence was restored. The ten-pound note earned that night apparently marked the beginning of a series of successful concerts and carried the singing of the Hutchinsons, with their "harmless jokes and tarnation sarcasm," straight into the hearts of the English people.

"In the musical world here," exclaimed a woman from Manchester, "the Hutchinson Family are gathering laurels, and gold as well. Nothing in this way can exceed the delight they give an English audience. The sister's singing of Tennyson's sweetly pathetic songs, 'I'm to be Queen of the May, Mother,' and 'Wake me early, Mother,'—was delicately beautiful. It was gratifying to me to see tears steal over the hard features of John Bull, showing how deeply his heart was touched by the chaste melody of this simple but charming child of nature from the far off mountains of New England. A lady, sitting near me, expressed her own enthusiasm, by saying that the Queen would love her dearly. The railway song, 'Clear the Track for Emancipation,' was received with a perfect uproar of applause. The Yankee ditty, 'Away down East,' brought into a glittering light all the mirthful feelings of the audience. I like their melody (in Georgia parlance) a *heap*, and have attended every soiree they have given here."

Not all Englishmen employed superlatives to describe the troupe's efforts, nor did all audiences endorse their political views. "They are fine musicians and splendid vocalists," acknowledged one editor, "but in turning their abilities to their own profit, by pandering to the tastes of ranting Abolitionists, they deserve but a poor opinion in public estimation." Another critic suggested that they give an antislavery concert, "sing out all their peculiar notions on slavery," and then devote themselves to sheer entertainment.

The Hutchinsons were calloused to such rebukes. They judged their effectiveness, in a measure, by the amount of ire aroused in their audiences, for they never considered themselves solely singers. They felt they had a solemn part to play in the reformation of the world. And many audiences overlooked their propaganda in the enjoyment of their music. British criticism, like American, seemed only to whet popular appetites, and soon after the Liverpool concert the family received letters soliciting engagements from many parts of England. The prediction of a Liverpool friend had come true. "Cheer up, my Yankee lads," he said. "In spite of British fashion you will succeed in the path you have struck out."

In answer to one of the many invitations, the troupe in late September went aboard the *Madrid*, a pitching, sickening vessel, bound for Dublin. John, never a good sailor, moaned that the crossing was ten times worse than the Atlantic. In Dublin they put up at the Hotel Northumberland, where Douglass was staying, and the next night they gave their first concert in Ireland.

As they filed into the hall past a gloomy doorkeeper, they peered into the pit to judge the temper of the audience. One lone Irishwoman sat there. Tiptoeing back to his dressing room, a narrow closet warmed by a small fire and lighted by a single weak gas jet, John said he felt like Napoleon at Moscow and was sure an avalanche of indifference would crush the family's efforts. Lonely and bitterly disappointed, he pined for the granite hills of New Hampshire. Softly he hummed:

Ah! why from our own native land did we part,
With its mountains and valleys so dear to each heart?
Ah! why did we leave the enjoyments of home
O'er the wide waste of waters as strangers to roam?

When the brothers, with Abby trailing behind, took their places on the platform, the crowd was still pitifully small, but Douglass was there with two friends. An old man sitting in a front row provided the only generous applause. After each song he pounded the floor and beat the edge of the platform with his cane and screamed "bravo" and "encore" at the top of his lungs. "We made up our minds to go home after this concert," wrote John.

But Douglass urged them to stay on and help him develop abolitionist sentiment, so for two or three evenings he and the Hutchinsons were booked together in the antislavery cause. The ex-slave spoke first and distributed his literature, and then the brothers and Abby would conclude with appropriate selections.

During the day the Hutchinsons practiced a little and gawked at Irish sights and sounds. Husbanding their dwindling finances, they toured most of Dublin and vicinity on foot. From the top of Dockey Hill, they compared the Sugarloaf Mountains with American heights and decided they liked the view from High Rock better! Dirty urchins, skilled professional beggars, besieged Abby, realizing perhaps that she was the openhanded member of the quartet. Judson shook his head at the sight of women laboriously digging wizened potatoes from small hills and said, "Half that crop looks bad to me."

One day, aimlessly wandering through crooked streets, they saw a brawny man surrounded by a pack of clamoring children. He was Daniel O'Connell, hero of Ireland and author of the penny-a-month plan for liberating Erin. He looked as strong and vigorous and wild as the mountainous country, the storm-lashed strip between Dingle Bay and the River Kenmare, from which he came. Dedicated to Irish nationalism, O'Connell was riding the crest of popularity when the Hutchinsons met him.

The next evening they heard him speak before such a huge crowd that John said he had to get out or suffocate. But he took with him one sentence which he frequently quoted against slavery: "He that commuteth crime gives strength to the enemy."

Later the troupe visited another Irish reformer, who lived at Kingston and whose fame as a temperance worker had excited their admiration. Father Theobald Mathew, a Capuchin friar, hailed from the county of Tipperary and was as Irish as Paddy's pig. Genial and openhearted, he loved proverbs. In broad brogue he greeted John: "I'm glad you decided to come. 'Take time by the forelock, for he is bald behind.'"

Father Mathew was busy at the time administering the temperance pledge and making cash gifts to the unfortunate. His chapel clerk was aghast. "Faith!" he said to John, "an' if the streets of Cork were paved with gold and our Father Mathew had control over them, there wouldn't be a paving stone in all Cork by the end of the year." When the Hutchinsons left, they felt they had been in the company of one of the world's great men.

Pleasant as all this sightseeing and visiting was, the Hutchinsons either had to make money or plan to return to America while they could still pay their passage. Fortunately their old friend, Henry Russell, was giving concerts in Dublin and invited them to appear with him. The plan was for Russell to sing, in his heavy baritone of small compass, the verses of *Boatmen of the Ohio*, while the Hutchinsons would take the chorus from behind a curtain. Russell, son of a Jewish London merchant, was having tremendous success with his compositions *The Old Arm Chair* and *Woodman, Spare that Tree*, and the desperate New Englanders agreed to his proposal.

"When we struck into the chorus," said John, "it seemed as if the house would come down. Henry rushed in to tell us to sing louder. Then he invited us on the stage, and we sang *The Old Granite State*."

"We took over the rest of the concert," continued Asa. "Afterwards he offered us a thousand dollars to tour England with him,

but we refused. We were tarnation bent to make good ourselves or go home."



When the Hutchinsons left Dublin for Manchester, they rode with hogs, cattle, and horses, and they wondered, after it was too late, whether it would have been better to accept Russell's offer. From Manchester the eager quartet toured England's great industrial district, singing at Bolton, a dirty town begrimed with soot, at Halifax, and at Darwin, where the hotel looked like a prison. They had set Tom Hood's *Bridge of Sighs* to music of their liking and were introducing it as their newest song.

Thanksgiving Day found them disconsolate. John missed the turkey-laden table of New England and regretted his absence from those he loved. "Little did I think," he entered in his diary, "when trudging through the snow to the old district school-house, with my book in one hand and a piece of Johnny-cake in the other, singing as I went, and hurrahing for Jackson, who was President of the United States, that I should ever visit Old England. But time and fate have brought it about; and here I am, a lonely, self-exiled, ignorant man, left to deal with the future."

The homesickness increased as the Yuletide season approached. Judson fell ill, and Abby could not see a sprig of mistletoe without thinking of the New Hampshire home. When John knocked the head from a barrel of apples, chestnuts, and hickory nuts sent from the old farm, the troupe were more tearful than glad.

They had hoped to spend Christmas in London but had to remain in Manchester, for they were booked solid thereabouts until the end of January. It was good, though, to be jingling extra money in their pockets and to feel confident of success once more. They reached London on January 25 and found modest rooms on the third floor of a boardinghouse at 21 Hollis Street, near Hanover Square.

When they received an invitation to dinner from Charles Dickens, they felt there was nothing more that London, or,

indeed, Victoria's Empire, could offer. Dickens outdid himself to provide suitable companions for his American guests. Douglas Jerrold, author of *Mrs. Caudle's Curtain Lecture*, was there, along with Samuel Rogers the poet and Charles Macready, whose name was a theater byword.

At dinner Abby, sitting between Dickens and Jerrold, turned down her wineglass. Dickens looked at Jerrold and said with a twinkle, "Well, Douglas, after dinner we also will give up wine—until tomorrow."

After coffee the guests gathered in the drawing room for small talk and for songs by the Hutchinsons. When Abby and her brothers left Dickens' home that evening, they felt, for the first time, truly at home abroad.

Their first London concert was given on February 10 at the Hanover Square Rooms, sometimes called the Queen's Concert Rooms. Five hundred people attended, including some who were distinguished in the arts. Mary Howitt the poet was there, and Eliza Cook, author of *The Irish Emigrant's Lament*. John noticed the actress Charlotte Cushman, and Asa recognized John Ross Dix, author of *Pen and Ink Sketches*.

Warm personal congratulations after the concert sent the troupe to bed with confidence that London was more than friendly. So the next morning when John brought in the papers, he could scarcely believe the unfavorable press notices spread before him. One critic bluntly said the brothers had better throw away their fiddles. Another called them a "batch" of singers. The blow was so great that each member of the troupe went out alone to walk off his depression.

Judson came back from his walk saying he would not sing again; he was going to pack up his fiddle and go home. "London is too full of musical talent of all kinds," he muttered crossly.

"I stumbled over street musicians everywhere I turned this morning," continued Abby. "Even opera stars are abundant here."

"These English don't like Americans anyway," cut in Asa. "We're too Yankee, that's what's the matter. The workers are

the only people who appreciate us. We ought to leave London for the industrial towns. We'll do all right there."

"Well," said John, "a blow is as good as a puff—they're both windy."



Going down to Loughborough early in March, they sang joyfully at a convention of teetotalers and felt they were just where they belonged. People in small towns near by turned out in numbers to hear them sing, and approved and applauded. Asa had been right when he insisted their strength lay in communities of workers. At Birmingham admirers presented them with a handsome set of Shakespeare and took them to Warwick and Kenilworth, where they were impressed by the castle's massive walls but depressed by the "many cruelties and outrages that had been committed there." Returning to Manchester, they sang to a crowd of six thousand on May 16.

One morning John slit an envelope just come by morning post from Ambleside in England's beautiful lake district. "It's from Harriet Martineau," he shouted. "She wants us to visit her. She says everybody there wants to hear us sing."

Miss Martineau, novelist and author of a volume describing an extensive tour of the United States in 1834, had read in the *People's Journal* that the Hutchinsons were visiting England. She noted that they were called "exactly what Americans—the children of a young, bold republic—ought to be; full of fresh, original character; free from conventionalities, whether of society or opinion; vigorous in intellect; ardent in spirit; and combining, with all the simplicity and tenderness of the child, the wisdom and expansive views of the man." Her curiosity was piqued, and she sat down to invite them to her cottage of rough stone, where they might enjoy the lake country and tell her of the progress of American society.

She was not disappointed. Even the mid-June weather seemed to outdo itself on the day of their arrival. "The soft ruddy evening fell on Wansfell," remembered Miss Martineau. "The

purple hollows of Loughrigg, the deep shadows on the western side of the lake, pierced by lines of silver light—the white gables of the houses at Clappersgate, peeping from the woods which skirt Loughrigg—and the little grey church on its knoll in the centre of the Brathay valley—these made up a vision of delicious coloring.”

A barouche, with one bonnet and several grey caps in it, scattered gravel in her drive, and the Hutchinsons, gay and carefree, climbed down with their traps. The brothers were in their best form, and Sister Abby proved charming, “her sweet face looking as calm and innocent as any baby’s.”

“The first thing is to go down to the White Lion and see if the concert stage is all right. I’ve made all arrangements for you to sing,” said Miss Martineau. “More than two hundred people are coming.”

“It’s a small place,” said John, looking at the tavern’s room, “and it’s going to be mighty hot.”

“Let’s see how our voices sound,” suggested Abby, and the group put their heads together for some practice notes.

“What those few notes were to others, I know not,” said their hostess. “I saw afterwards that a number of people had on the instant gathered in the street; and a little friend of mine observed that he had now heard music that he thought beautiful. As for me, long years of solitary sickness had passed since I last heard harmony, or anything that I could call music, except one song in my sick room from Adelaide Kemble; and this was almost too much for me now, in full health. It thrilled through me, as if I were a harp, played on by the wind. It seems to me that I never before heard such harmony, such perfect accord, as between those four voices.”

The next day Miss Martineau invited seventeen friends to picnic on the shore of Grasmere. They played duck and drake, dabbled in the cool water, and ducked their heads, letting water stream from soaked hair. At noon white cloths were spread, and the wicker hampers of food were emptied. “We sang songs, spoke pieces, and were as happy as mortals could be,” said John.

The next morning, day of the concert, Asa swung a scythe in the fields, and even Abby trimmed high grass around the shrubbery. A neighbor at Grasmere offered his lawn for the performance, and this was accepted as an agreeable substitute for the small, hot room at the inn. When six o'clock came, three hundred people packed the open space. Rhododendron bushes formed the singers' dressing room, and a wooden floor placed between two sycamore trees was their platform. In front sat an old gentleman in a wheelchair and behind him ranged row upon row of tradespeople, servants, and laborers. The quartet, their eyes upon the peaks of High Close, opened with *The Cot Where We Were Born*.

We stood upon the mountain height,
And viewed the valleys o'er;
The sun's last ray, with mellow light,
Illum'd the distant shore;
We gazed with rapture on the scene,
Where first in youth's bright morn
We play'd, where near us stood serene
The cot where we were born.

As the troupe left Ambleside next morning, bound for Scotland, Abby remarked, "The farther away from London we are, the better times we have." And behind them, Miss Martineau was writing, "To me, their music can never die away into silence."



In Glasgow the Hutchinsons' enthusiasm was dampened by a series of incidents which, although small in themselves, irritated the righteous brothers. In the first place, the Hutchinsons loathed the practice of tipping, and they had been "touched" by clerks, bootblacks, and chambermaids for days. Thoroughly exasperated, John told a porter, "You can't come the 'Scotch grab' on Yankees." Then too, the troupe, along with their dedication to extreme temperance, were militantly opposed to tobacco, and Scotland was a snuff-using land. On their first Sunday in Glas-

gow, the Hutchinsons, clad in their concert best, opened the door of a kirk, and staggered back.

"The pervasive atmosphere of the place came with such a stunning power upon my olfactories," John recalled, "that at first shock I was inclined to withdraw, but staggered through the thick fog and was ushered to a seat with a large congregation around me, and soon observed that the male portion of the audience at very short intervals were taking their pinch of snuff from a box situated almost directly in front of each of them upon a desk." This was evil enough, but when John saw the minister stop his preaching to dip into a box under the Bible, his disgust was unbounded. In foul temper the Hutchinsons retired to their rooms to soothe themselves, if possible, with a few hymns.

The trouble now, as so often, was that the Hutchinsons' rigid, perhaps puritanical, background conditioned their every thought and gesture. The world and its ways were either completely right or utterly wrong. An unhealthy strain seemed to permeate the family, so that judgments were warped and sometimes minds lost their tenuous hold upon reality. Then too, by July of 1846 the Hutchinsons were fatigued with travel and were dreadfully homesick. The "peculiar and interesting" Scotch people, although they welcomed the singers, were dour in their cordiality, and the Hutchinsons always felt unwanted if they were not received with widespread arms.

Nevertheless their Glasgow concert was well attended, and the press notices were flattering. After this performance the troupe moved on for a concert in Edinburgh and then started for the Scottish highlands and the country of Rob Roy. Abby had purchased in London a volume of Burns and a book describing the rich Loch Lomond district, and sometimes while John entered his thoughts in his neat journal, she or Judson read selections aloud. They never explored new country without first jamming themselves with facts.

The trip to Loch Lomond, with its view of thirty wooded islands, charmed Abby and the brothers. Jouncing pleasantly along on shaggy ponies over five miles of mountain trails, they

first glimpsed the sparkling lake and the twin peaks of Ben Cruachan from a crest. Dismounting, they walked to the edge of a steep and put to music the words of Sir Walter Scott.

The moon's on the lake, the mist's on the brae
And our clan has a name that is nameless by day;
Our signal for fight, which from monarchs we drew
Must be heard but by night in our vengeful hallu.
Then hallu! hallu! hallu!

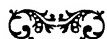
Then they descended to the lake and took a steamboat to see the legendary cave of Rob Roy, near the rocky Craig Royston.

After a concert and a visit to the famous castle in Stirling, they hurried by stage and train back to Edinburgh for a few days of intensive sightseeing. Abby, as usual, planned the daily tours. Each night she consulted her cheap guidebooks and entered, in her precise hand, the marginal notations that would help her to keep the boys entertained. When they visited George Heriot's home for poor children, the eighty youngsters touched John's heart, and he said, "This, I think, is the best method a man can take to use his money and do good."

Edinburgh's relics of antiquity did not fascinate the Hutchinsons nearly so much as did the knowledge that George Comb, world-famous phrenologist, was a native of the city and was then living, with his wealthy wife, at 45 Melville Street. Comb and his brother Andrew were heroes to Abby and Judson, who had studied their ideas so long and so avidly in the Milford kitchen, and even John had read Andrew Comb's observations on mental derangement in the first American edition, published in Boston in 1834.

Harriet Martineau, herself a dabbler in things mystic and occult, was acquainted with Comb and had suggested that the troupe call on him. They found a quick-talking, busy, worried man who explained that since his lecture tour in Germany he had been obliged to curtail many of his former activities because of ill-health. At present, he said, he was writing a pamphlet devoted to the relations between science and religion, which he hoped to publish the next year, in 1847. His desk was littered

with anatomical notes, printer's proof, and innumerable letters from such close friends as Robert Chambers and George Eliot.



Now that they had extra money in their pockets, the Hutchinsons felt that before they returned to Liverpool and took ship for America, they wanted to make some tangible contribution for the relief of the famine sufferers in Ireland. Of all the people they had visited, the Irish touched their sentimental hearts most deeply, and they were genuinely grieved at the heart-rending conditions the Irish were facing. Judson had been right when he said half the potato crop was bad, and now the Irish were caught in the midst of a great food shortage. The troupe gave two hundred dollars for relief and heard themselves described as "excellent people with noble hearts, alive to a thousand warm impulses and generous affections, and always on the side of right and humanity."

Safe in Liverpool, the troupe found time, in the midst of frenzied shopping and packing, to give two concerts and entertain a few English friends. With these John frequently bickered over social conditions in the British Isles. Liverpool with its miles of docks; Glasgow jammed with poor workers, living in squalid wynds whose courtyards stank with rotting manure piles; and London, vast and filthy, with hundreds of ragged children apprenticed in workshops—all these disgusted him. "In Dublin and Glasgow, in Edinburgh and Manchester, and in Liverpool and London," he said, "we threw pennies to beggars. Gangs of hungry, ragged creatures followed us everywhere. I'm glad we're sailing home where cripples and children don't have to beg to live."

Douglass and Jerrold were among the friends who gathered at the dock to see them off when they boarded the *Cambria* on the Fourth of July. Douglass shook hands, saying, "You are singing the yokes from the necks and the fetters from the limbs of my race." Jerrold spoke of their pleasant evening together at Dickens' home and wished them Godspeed. As the ship slipped

its moorings, John leaned far over the rail to invite all to visit Uncle Sam, for "he is rich enough to give you all a farm."

The passage home was pleasant and quiet. Sometimes John, piqued by British travelers going to the United States for the first time and expecting to find a land of Sam Slicks and pumpkin-headed yokels, dropped his polished manners and played the typical New England Jonathan. Verses, stories, poems, and tall tales poured in endless stream from his lips until credulous listeners could scarcely tell when he was fooling.

On the last night out the captain gave a pork-and-beans party in honor of the Hutchinsons. Abby attended in the white silk dress she wore on the concert stage, and the brothers were decked out in flaring collars, striped waistcoats, long-tailed blues, and close-fitting trousers. Among the songs they sang after dinner they introduced *Clar De Kitchen*, a comic novelty. John, playing the role of a rustic, Jeremiah Barnbeans, announced that he would sing the verses alone and the rest of the troupe would take the chorus.

An old bay horse lay in the road,
And on his hip-bone sat a toad;
He raised his voice the hills around,
"Hark from the tombs, a doleful sound."

Then came the refrain, swelling from the throats of the trio.

So clar de kitchen, old folk, young folk;
Clar de kitchen, old folk, young folk;
Old Virginia never tire!

John cut a turkey wing with the second and third verses.

A little old man came riding by,
Says he, "old man, your horse will die,
And if he dies, I'll tan his skin,
But if he lives I'll ride him again."

I have a sweet-heart in dis town,
She wears a cloak and a new silk gown,
And as she walks the streets around;
The hollow of her foot makes a hole in the ground.

Shortly past noon the next day, July 17, the *Cambria's* paddle wheels churned the waters of Boston harbor. Elizur Wright, editor of the *Chronotype*, rushed to greet the troupe when they came ashore. "Eleven months is too long for the Hutchinsons to be away," he said. "We need you here at home, and we want you to stay." When Abby told him she would love to return to England some day, she little dreamed that in 1874, as a married woman of forty-four, she would retrace her steps and handle daguerreotypes left as souvenirs on her first tour.

Boston looked better than ever to John. Prompted by a nagging urge which he only half understood, he visited the quarters on Purchase Street where the brothers had lived when they first left home. How he'd hated Boston then. Lowell Mason wouldn't give us a chance, he thought, but we climbed the hard way, an' now they say we're famous.

From Boston the weary quartet went directly to Milford. There in the old farmhouse, after supper was cleared away and dishes washed, the family gathered in the parlor, and the travelers distributed gifts and chatted of their doings in castled England, St. Patrick's Erin, and the Scottish moors. More than once the conversation ran at cross purposes, with the quartet insisting upon local news and their parents breathless for tales of adventure abroad. Jesse and Polly were a little awed by these children of theirs who had crossed the Atlantic. Finally John could stand it no longer.

"You know, Mother," he exclaimed with a tinge of irritation, "our trip was mostly hard work. We went from one place to another on boats, in trains that opened at the wrong end, atop jolting coaches and stages, and we put up in boardinghouses. Sometimes they were cheap and sometimes they were clean. We were lucky if they were both at the same time."

"And there were times when we didn't know if we could pay our rent and buy two-penny buns," Asa went on. "England's all right, I guess, but it's not the place for common farmers like us. We're different, and I don't guess we'll ever see eye to eye with them. In London we were Yankee rubes. Some Londoners

thought less of us than they did the Ioway Indians George Catlin took over a few years back. Maybe we'd been a bigger hit if we'd painted our faces and stuck feathers in our hair."

"I'm glad we went, though," said Judson. "We learned a lot an' saw some nice places an' people. An' we made money finally."

Before bed old Jesse, as was his custom, opened the brass-clasped, pictorial family Bible. Selecting a verse from Genesis, his favorite book, he read: "'And the Lord said unto Jacob, Return unto the land of thy father, and to thy kindred, and I will be with thee.'"

The Trouble We're In

GRANDFATHER LEAVITT'S death a few days later saddened the family, but Milford tongues clicked that poor old Andy Leavitt wasn't allowed to play the lead at his own funeral. The Hutchinsons, they whispered, stole the show when they rose from the mourners' bench to sing *The Angel's Invitation to the Pilgrim*. The village gossiped that the Hutchinsons now were wealthy, they were purchasing large farms, they were high-hat, and they were going to leave Milford to live in style at Old High Rock.

When John bought a farm in Amherst and moved his family there, local suspicions seemed confirmed. Yet the village never knew about the quarrel that came close to splitting the family into two jealous and competitive groups.

This antagonism had simmered for more than two years, since before the death of Benjamin. Each time the troupe returned from a concert tour, they brought stories of prosperity and carried hard cash to prove their success. To the brothers left behind to drudge on the land and to be dominated by old Jesse, life seemed dreary and profitless when contrasted with the exciting acclaim and wealth that an outside world showered upon Asa, John, Judson, Jesse, and Abby. First Benjamin, then Zephaniah had hinted from time to time that he too would like to go on tour with a company of his own. This suggestion always provoked family discord, with John insisting there was not room for two groups of Hutchinsons on the road.

When the original troupe left for England, Zephaniah saw his opportunity. He organized Joshua, Caleb, Rhoda, and himself into the "Home Branch" of the family and went on tour through the East, using the songs made popular by the original

troupe and imitating, as far as possible, the costumes and mannerisms of Abby and her brothers.

Word of this made John furiously angry, but he waited until after Grandfather Leavitt's funeral to bring the matter into the open. The entire family was gathered in the parlor, a room so swept and dusted it glistened. Old Jesse creaked back and forth in the walnut rocker. Exactly in the center of a marble-topped table lay the family Bible in which he had just set down the death of Leavitt.

John broke the silence. "I suppose you'll be wantin' to know our plans."

Polly looked up from her mending. "We're always interested, you know," she said mildly.

"I don't much see the good of any more singin'. Two troupes of Hutchinsons on the road are just one too many."

"You want all the money, I s'pose?" Zephaniah was quick to take up the challenge.

"Why not?" John replied coolly. "Who started singin'? Who went on the first concert in the carryall? Who broke the ice in Boston and New York? Who wrote the music and the songs you've been singin' while we was gone?"

"Yes, an' who stayed home an' did the chores, sweat in the field, an' cared fer the house while you was livin' in hotels and gettin' your names in the papers?"

"Why you did, Zeph," Asa broke in, determined to be a peacemaker. "We know we couldn't a gone out singin', makin' money fer you all to use, if it hadn't been fer you an' Rhoda an' Josh an' Caleb here at home. We was workin' fer you, just like you was workin' fer us."

"Warn't no harm in goin' out singin' while you was in England," sulked Zeph.

"Was too," said John.

"There wasn't!"

"I say there was!"

"Be you goin' to spend the afternoon of grandfather's funeral quarrelin'?" Asa walked over to stand in front of John. "Now

don't go interruptin', John. Listen to me a minute. What's done's done, an' . . ."

"An' what you want to do now is fix it so the Home Branch stays on the farm."

"You shut up too, Zeph!"

"I got chores to do." Zeph started out.

"Where you goin'?"

"To the barn," yelled Zeph, "where I kin sing to the old cow without nobody rearin' on hind legs."

Then old Jesse spoke. "Set down, Zephaniah, and you too, Asa." They knew that domineering tone and obeyed it as if they were again small boys in linsey overalls.

Jesse moved his hand slowly across the table until it rested on the Bible. Every blue vein stood out as plain as stream markings on a New Hampshire map. The hand turned pages deliberately, one leaf after another. The family waited.

Jesse began to read, forming his words carefully: "'Set me as a seal upon thine heart, as a seal upon thine arm: for love is strong as death; jealousy is cruel as the grave: the coals thereof are coals of fire, which hath a most vehement flame.'"

Gently he closed the Book. "There ain't much more to say. Fer more than forty years I've been findin' answers here." He laid his hand on the brass-clasped volume. "Maybe you better do the same. It's time fer supper now, an' Zeph, you best git to the milkin'."

Abby went out with Polly to put on the beans and warm the corn bread. After a few minutes John followed Zeph to the barn. Milk splattered into the pail as Zephaniah worked, his head against a brindle flank and his fingers kneading soft teats. He looks all of his thirty-six years and more too, thought John. He's never been away much. He's just worked the farm.

John dragged up a stool. "Here, Zeph, let's see what I can do."

They put the milk in the springhouse and went in to supper together, arm in arm. Polly knew the quarrel was over, and old Jesse's grace that evening was more fervent than usual. But the Home Branch was ended. Everyone was sure of that.

Within a few years Zephaniah moved to Illinois, where he died on April 19, 1853.



September was a crowded month. John and Asa cut and split wood, and in their spare time practiced singing. Father Jesse made no complaint if, after a day's work was done, the vocalists rehearsed back of the house, near the old stone quarry. Although never directly admitting his enjoyment, he would wander out, quite casually, to the quarry to listen. Abby noted a suspicious tapping of the toe, but the old man merely said he was stamping on a bug.

Meanwhile the younger Jesse was making arrangements for a series of concerts in the fall. He hoped to conclude the tour in New York and bring the singers back to Milford in time for Christmas.

They left home on October 1, 1846, performing in Manchester, Concord, and Nashua before going to Lowell and from there to Boston. The smaller New England towns welcomed them enthusiastically. Long before concert time Manchester residents filled the hall while others jammed sidewalks and the street. There, for the first time, the Hutchinsons sang their song of the wanderer, *We're With You Once Again*, which Ditson was to publish.

We're with you once again, kind friends,
No more our footsteps roam;
Where it begun, our journey ends,
Amid the scenes of home.
No other clime has skies so blue,
Or streams so broad and clear;
And where are hearts so warm and true
As those that meet us here?

Arriving at Concord in time to hear John P. Hale address an Independent Democratic convention, the troupe slipped quietly into the gallery. He had scarcely finished speaking when the Hutchinsons, without invitation, arose to sing. With the first

note of *There's A Good Time Coming*, the audience cheered and yelled so that the singers had to stop until the noise quieted. When they came to the verses promising the triumph of charity and the decline of war, applause thundered through the auditorium. As it died, the singers repeated the verses.

There's a good time coming boys,
A good time coming;
Hateful rivalries of creed,
Shall not make their martyrs bleed,
In the good time coming.
Religion shall be shorn of pride,
And flourish all the stronger;
And charity shall trim her lamp,
Wait a little longer.

There's a good time coming boys,
A good time coming;
War in all men's eyes shall be
A monster of iniquity,
In the good time coming.
Nations shall not quarrel then,
To prove which is the stronger;
Nor slaughter men for glory's sake,
Wait a little longer.

"We were in perfect ecstasy," said a critic in the *Lowell Voice of Industry*, after hearing the song, "and on the point several times of speaking to some one to pull our hair just to remind us that we were still an inhabitant of this terrestrial globe."

But Jesse, directing the troupe, knew that the closer they came to New York and Boston, the greater would be adverse criticism. They were determined to continue their crusade against slavery and to damn the annexation of Texas. The coming of the Mexican War had settled their minds on the Texas question. Even Judson was against the annexation now.

Fortunately Boston reaction was favorable except in the *Flag Of Our Union*, which proclaimed the quartet extremely ordinary vocalists and decidedly poor instrumental performers.

Jesse breathed easier and took his singers on to New York. There he met real opposition.

The Hutchinsons, spick and span in fresh costumes, opened on Wednesday, November 18, 1846, in the Tabernacle, where they had sung so many times. The place was crowded. A reporter for the New York *Commercial* noted that the audience was composed of younger, rather than older, persons, and that females outnumbered males. He looked in vain, he said, for costly, fashionable dresses, gaudy bouquets, and the impudent opera glasses that marked Gotham's aristocracy. He saw only one pair of mustaches.

All went well until the troupe, zealous for reform, sang a recently written addition to *The Old Granite State*.

War and slavery perplex us
And ere long will sorely vex us,
Oh, we're paying dear for Texas
In the war with Mexico.
Such a demonstration
Is beneath our station
When by arbitration
We can settle every war.

The line "paying dear for Texas" hit the house when it was full to overflowing with pleasure at the family song. From the gallery a hiss unwound through the crowd until "utter and disgraceful" confusion reigned. Ladies and gentlemen of proslavery leanings gathered their wraps and marched, heads erect, up the aisles and out. Men who had voted for Polk on an annexation platform made vulgar noises. To balance the hisses and boos, abolitionists cheered and clapped. When order was finally restored, the concert was continued, but it had gone flat as a hoecake.

Safe in their rooms at the Marlborough House, Abby burst into tears, Judson grumbled that he wished he'd stayed in England, and Jesse was torn between his responsibilities as business manager and his personal antislavery convictions. John was stubbornly calm in the entry he made in his diary: "We got

through the concert without much trouble. We sang against war with Mexico, and against the 'honorable' system of enslaving the human race. With the exception of a little hissing all went off smoothly."

If he really thought all had gone smoothly, he was mistaken. Practically every paper in New York had a reporter present to cover the Hutchinson's first Gotham concert since their return from Europe, and these correspondents represented all shades of political opinion. Papers the next day took violent issue with the troupe and with one another.

After complimenting the family on their sweet native music, the New York *Express* said: "But we feel bound, with the best and kindest feelings toward them, and with the sincerest wishes for their welfare, to recommend to them to omit from their programme, and not to introduce, songs alluding to the political relations of the country." Had it not been for the general esteem held by the public for the Hutchinsons, said the *Progressive Democrat*, the demonstration against them would have become really violent.

The *Courier and Enquirer* attacked them for poor manners and worse taste, saying: "We sincerely hope that the caresses and flatteries they received from the English haters of everything American, have not at once extinguished their patriotism and destroyed their sense of good taste and propriety." This was too much for the *Anti-Slavery Standard*. "If the people don't like the Hutchinsons' abolitionist songs, they have a sufficient remedy in the liberty everybody has to stay home."

"So even the antislavery papers are against us," snarled Jesse, wadding the *Standard* into a ball and hurling it into the fireplace. "They want people to stay away from our concerts."

"That's all right with me. Let 'em stay away. I always said New York was a town of pewtershins, poppycocks, and pumpkin heads." John hadn't been so discouraged for years.

"Let 'em stay away? Are you mad?" Jesse whacked his brother between the shoulders so hard his head bobbed. "Do you want us to lose money?"

Asa coughed. "What do you expect? You've never listened to me when I wanted to charge low prices and sing for a cause instead of for money. You're always wantin' money to make the mare go. An' you try to saddle her with reforms. I say, let's forget about big profits an' sing for liberty."

"Who's goin' to pay the bills fer liberty, eh?" Jesse knotted his fist under Asa's nose. "All you do is sing. That's all. Do you ever bother 'bout bills—the everlasting bills? Printers' bills fer posters, tickets, and newspaper ads. Hotel bills. Bills fer fare on the cars. Bills fer your grub! Who worries 'bout bills in this family 'cept me? I can't pay bills if people don't come to concerts. I can't pay bills with Texas. But you, all you do is say forget 'bout bills."

"Now, Jess, you know I didn't mean it jest thataway."

"You don't know what you mean. None of you ever do, 'cept maybe Abby. One minute you're practical farmers and the next you're long-haired radicals. I wish to God you'd be one or t'other all the time. What are we goin' to do now, answer me that?"

"Why, Jesse," said Judson slyly, "we'll just go to Philadelphia. There's lots of antislavery folks there."

"So you want to run, do you?" Jesse answered just as Jud had thought he would. "Well, I'm not aimin' to. We'll stay here an' sing abolitionist songs jest like we planned. They can't scare me out. No, sir. Not by a tarnal sight!"

Jesse need not have worried. Despite newspaper attacks, the Hutchinsons continued to sing to packed houses. "I think," mused John to Abby, gay in a new dress, "some folks come just to be able to say they heard the Hutchinsons, others because they like to boo and hiss, and a few more because they really enjoy our singing."



Seeing that the troupe could not return to Milford in time for the holidays, Jesse arranged to take them to Philadelphia, as Judson had suggested. They stayed at the home of Edward

Hopper, son of their old friend Isaac. In this Quaker and abolitionist atmosphere the Hutchinsons felt perfectly at ease. Anti-slavery advocates mingled with Hicksite "plain bonnets" until the house was virtually a reform forum, and now and again the entire group marched gaily off to skate, for the New-Hampshire-bred Hutchinsons were competent on ice.

Out in the open, with the wind nipping their cheeks pink, the Hutchinsons were happy and free, forgetting their bitter memories of New York. An article by Mrs. S. T. Martyn in the December *Ladies' Wreath* made them happier. It said: "And if ever the day shall arrive when universal brotherhood shall bind together the nation—when oppression in all its loathsome forms shall disappear for ever, and peace and purity fill the regenerated earth, we cannot but feel, that among the agencies employed to bring about a consumation so glorious, not the least effective, will have been the moral power exerted by the Hutchinsons."

The troupe, capering on the ice, felt they had never had such a carefree holiday season. The first two concerts in the Musical Fund Hall had brought in fourteen hundred dollars; they were surrounded by kind friends; and they were happy in the reform cause. Judson, lighthearted, stretched chilled fingers toward a fire and watched the skaters skim around him.

"Singin' time," he called.

When the group gathered, Jud led off with a darky tune. His sense of humor drew him naturally to the minstrel type of singing, but the troupe's respect for the colored slave prevented them from including Negro numbers on their programs. Deep in his heart Judson was sorry. He loved the gay airs and was glad for this chance to sing them. He stamped his feet and strummed an imaginary banjo.

I was born in Alabama,
My master's name was Meal,
He used to own a yallow gal,
Her name was Lucy Neale.

Oh! poor Lucy Neale,
Oh! poor Lucy Neale,
If I had her in my arms,
How happy I would feel.

Miss Lucy she was taken sick,
She eat too much corn meal,
The Doctor he did gib her up,
Alas! poor Lucy Neale.

One day I got a letter,
And jet black was the seal
It was de announcement ob de death
Of my poor Lucy Neale.

The entire group joined in the final chorus, and then Judson sang snatches from other minstrel airs: *Zip Coon*, *Jim Brown*, *Jim Along Josey*, *Old Dan Tucker*, and *Coal Black Rose*, the first burnt-cork song of comic love.

Lubly Rosa Sambo cum,
Don't you hear de Banjo—tum, tum, tum,
Lubly Rosa Sambo cum,
Don't you hear de Banjo—tum, tum, tum,
Oh Rose de coal black Rose,
I wish I may be cortch'd if I don't lub Rose.

A strange voice called for Dan Emmett's *De Boatmen Dance*. "All right," said Judson. He squatted with two sticks of wood to simulate the bone castanets, so necessary to the minstrel song. John pretended he had the banjo, and Asa the tambourine.

De boatmen dance, de boatmen sing,
De boatmen up to ebry ting,
An when de boatmen gets on shore,
He spends his cash an works for more.

O dance de boatmen dance,
O dance all night till broad daylight,
And go home wid de gals in de morning.

When you go to de boatmen's ball,
Dance wid my wife, or don't dance at all;
Sky blue jacket an tarpaulin hat,
Look out my boys for de nine tail cat.

De boatman is a thrifty man,
Dare none can do as de boatman can;
I neber see a putty gal in my life
But dat she was a boatman's wife.

"Stew's ready," called Abby and Mrs. Hopper. They ladled steaming oysters into big bowls and brought the merry evening to an end.



Jesse came down to breakfast next morning worried and irritable again. Tucking a napkin in his vest, he turned to John. "I wonder if we did right?"

"You mean singin' those minstrel songs? I never had a better time in my life."

"No. I'm worried 'bout us advertisin' in the papers that colored folks are welcome in the Hall tonight. After sleepin' on it, I got to worryin'."

"Ain't no use frettin', Jess," said Asa, "when you knowed you done right."

"I look fer trouble, though."

Twelve hundred people edged into the Musical Fund Hall at eight o'clock, and among them were many Negroes. Peeping from backstage, John noticed Robert Purvis, an educated mulatto friend, sitting with Lucretia Mott and the Hoppers. Then he saw a policeman station himself at the head of the center aisle and wave back a colored couple. A surge of anger swept the audience.

Philadelphia's mayor, acting on an anonymous complaint, had instructed city officers to keep Negroes from entering the auditorium and had informed trustees of the Musical Fund Hall that the city would not be responsible for damage. John hoped

trouble could be avoided. This was not the first time the problem had arisen. Waiters at the Pearl Street House in Boston had refused to serve him when he lunched there with Frederick Douglass, and every guest had stalked out.

Fortunately no disturbance took place, and the concert continued as usual. The Hutchinsons, however, added a verse to *The Old Granite State*. No one mistook its meaning.

Party threats are not alarming,
For when music ceases charming
We can earn our bread by farming
In the old Granite State.

Philadelphia newspapers picked up the incident, and once again the Hutchinsons found themselves the center of bickering. The *Courier*, which the troupe called a "scurrilous little penny daily," although it was no such thing, suggested they give a concert exclusively for persons of color. "It is really time," snapped the *Sun*, "that some one should tell these people, in a spirit of friendly candor, that they are not apostles and martyrs, entrusted with a 'mission' to reform the world, but only a company of common song-singers, whose performances sound very pleasantly to the great mass of the people ignorant of real music, and finding an innocent gratification in listening to melodious sounds which they are capable of understanding."

The Hoppers and Mrs. Mott tried to comfort the Hutchinsons as the dispute grew more public and more acrimonious. But they would have none of it. Jesse canceled their three remaining concerts, and the troupe prepared to leave town. Lucretia Mott gave a farewell party for them on December 29. She called them martyrs to a principle and said Philadelphia had shamed itself forever.

Her opinion was shared by others. Greeley's New York *Tribune* sprang to the Hutchinsons' defense with strong words, and in Connecticut the Hartford *Charter Oak* delineated Philadelphia's character in language that stung. "This Queen-City of the Keystone State, seems determined to keep the black stain

of her infamy, that has been rubbed into the grain of her flesh by the smutty hand of mobocracy, and by no means let a repentant tear wash a white channel down her cheek. There she sits on her square wall and amid prim streets, with not enough of the drab sugar-shovel bonnet of her maidenhood left, to hide the unblushing cheek of her shame. The *Drab* has all gone into her character—she can put off ‘thee and thou’ and out-brass the most lawless of her peers, in her outrageous disregard of honor or human rights.”



Troubled and discouraged, the singers returned to New Hampshire soon after New Year's Day 1847. Jesse remained in Lynn, where a son, James, was born a few days later. And John's wife bore him a daughter, Viola, on Sunday morning, April 18. "The Lord has blessed me," he wrote in his diary, "and I hope to be always thankful."

Asa, grumbling that this was a baby's world and that no one paid attention to him, said he was going to Nantucket, Massachusetts, to attend to business. When he returned, he announced that he was wedding Elizabeth B. Chase on April 26. "You know," he drawled, "all the other boys are way ahead of me."

There was little concert singing in large cities the remainder of the year. In August, much to the disgust of their father, the younger members of the family took their wives and children for a vacation in the White Mountains. The caravan presented a novel sight as it crept through the countryside. Some fourteen persons rode in spring wagons, while another ancient vehicle, loaded with luggage, followed. Babies howled and were shushed, horses snorted, axles creaked, and above all rang the songs of the Hutchinson Family. Sometimes camp was made under the stars. Then children rolled on blankets spread on the bare ground. Rhoda and Abby cooked over an open fire.

As they passed through towns like Bath, Haverhill, Bellows

Falls, and Peterboro, the family sang impromptu little concerts, not only to help defray expenses but also because music bubbled in their blood. They were truly "singin' Yankees" from the Old Granite State.

The vacationists met other traveling groups of singers. Twice the Hutchinsons heard the Baker Family, another New Hampshire troupe, perform, and in Brattleboro a party of young men, the Burdett Family, serenaded in the dead of night. One of them was a boy of about fourteen with a beautiful alto voice. His name, John learned, was James Fisk, Jr., and he was a waiter in a local hotel. Years later Jim Fisk became one of the country's notorious stock speculators and was a close friend of Daniel Drew and Jay Gould. His life was ended by a bullet from an assassin's pistol.



Returning to Milford, the Hutchinsons remained at home until after January 4, 1848, when Judson's daughter, Jennie Lind, was born. Then the troupe went singing again. In March they arrived in New York, where Henry Clay was visiting. On the way Brother Jesse conceived the idea of writing a song in honor of the Great Compromiser. The first draft of *Harry of the West* was penned in a New Haven hotel room, John added a melody, and the song was rehearsed on the deck of a steamer en route to New York. When Captain Knight of the new ship *Henry Clay* heard the music, he prevailed upon the Hutchinsons to visit Clay and sing it for him.

Leaving the ship, they hurried to the New York Hotel, where Clay was guest of honor at a dinner. He had been lavishly entertained since his arrival, and when he left Castle Garden to drive down Broadway, thousands lined the avenue to cheer, flutter handkerchiefs, and lift tall hats.

In the cab on the way to the hotel Abby was troubled. Was it fitting for the Hutchinsons to honor with song a man who championed slavery? She tried to make her objections clear to her brothers, arguing that Clay had supported the Missouri

Compromise and that he was a bigoted Southerner. Jesse and John, excited by their new composition, ignored her, and Judson and Asa thought her attitude childish.

"Won't do no harm jest to sing a bit fer him," said Asa testily. "It don't mean we're proslavery."

"Of course not, Abby." Judson added his advice. "We know what we're doin'."

Abby said nothing more, but when she was introduced to Clay her foreboding returned. Drawing Jesse aside, she whispered, "You boys do the new song alone. He'll like it better." Jesse nodded, and the singing began.

Come brothers, rouse, let's hurry out,
To see our honored guest;
For lo! in every street they shout,
"Brave Harry of the West!"

The City now is all awake,
And in her laurels dressed,
And voices make the welkin shake
For Harry of the West.

Behold the aged Statesman comes!
In highest honors dressed;
No conq'ring hero ever shone
Like Harry of the West.

Nor shall a *party* feeling dare
To raise one narrow test,
But *all* shall in the tribute share,
To Harry of the West.

For the glorious day is coming near,
When wrong shall be redressed,
And Freedom's Star shine bright and clear
On Harry of the West.

Then hail! all-hail! thrice-honor'd Sage,
Our most distinguished guest!
We'll venerate thy good old age,
Brave Harry of the West!

Clay's eyes opened with astonishment at the song's appropriateness. He rose and walked to Jesse, saying, "What can I do to repay you for this great honor you have conferred upon me?" He then sent wine to the troupe, which they of course refused.

"If I were a young man like yourselves, I'd be a teetotaler too," smiled New York's guest.

The Hutchinsons responded, with Abby's help, by singing a temperance song, *Cold Water*, then *There's A Good Time Coming* and *The Old Granite State*. Then they left the hotel, fully satisfied that they had honored a prominent American even though they disagreed with his politics.

"See, Abby," teased Jesse, in fine humor over the success of *Harry of the West*, "nothing happened. Everything went all right."

Next morning, the *Tribune* gave extended space to the incident, and Jesse strutted to breakfast with the paper under his arm. As he tucked a napkin in his collar and reached for a glass of water, a finger tapped his shoulder.

"Pardon me, Mr. Hutchinson, but I've just been reading the paper."

"Yes, sir," said Jesse affably, although the man was a stranger.

"I thought the Hutchinsons were abolitionists and had no truck with slavery. Now I see you're courting favor with Henry Clay."

Astonished, Jesse tried to gather his wits to reply; but the man had gone. "Oh, the trouble we're in," Jesse said. And he thought of Abby's warning. He went quickly up to his room.

As news of the Clay incident spread rapidly throughout New England, great was the wrath of the antislavery groups against the Hutchinsons. "No wonder Mr. Clay was gratified at the offering of incense of this kind, from a reputedly anti-slavery quarter," fumed Garrison in the *Liberator*. "The bravery of 'Harry of the West' is to fight duels, scourge men, pollute women, and sell children; and this the Hutchinsons well know. They have degraded themselves in the eyes of all who prize

moral consistency and real uprightness. Great will be the astonishment of the friends of the slave across the Atlantic, in receiving this intelligence. We are not surprised that Jesse should have written such a song, for there is no end to his inconsistencies and follies. His well known 'Emancipation Song' runs thus:

'Railroads to emancipation
Cannot rest on *Clay* foundation';

but now the strain is 'Brave Harry of the West'—and 'garlands,' 'laurels,' and 'honors' are recognized as justly showered upon this 'distinguished' pillar of the accursed slave system!"

Garrison called Jesse a rabid Locofoco who supported Caleb Cushing, the "lickspittle of the Slave Power, and the ambitious adventurer in the war with Mexico, for Governor of Massachusetts."

Fortunately the New York *Eagle* defended Jesse by saying that Clay was the guest of the city, invited by both Whigs and Democrats, that party rancor was forgotten, and that everyone was paying respects to a great statesman and civilian. It mentioned Clay's stand against the war with Mexico and said the people desired to honor that position even more than the man. "It seems to us," concluded the *Eagle*, "that while no one should be condemned for a single act, even if it be an inconsistent one, there was nothing in this one of the Hutchinsons' which should be offset against a life-time of hearty devotion to the cause of humanity."

"This controversy may well break us," John said seriously.

"I know it, and I don't know what to about it." Jesse had seldom been so agitated. "You know," he continued, "I didn't think for a minute all this would happen. I had it in my head just to honor Clay and let him know where we stood. Not a single word in any of the songs we sang could be called pro-slavery. Sometimes I think Garrison goes too far, too fast."

"That speech Clay made in Lexington last November didn't make him out a slaver. He said then, and I guess he meant it, that he'd be glad if not a single slave was in the country."

Jesse snapped his fingers. "I'm goin' to write Garrison right now. Maybe I can fix it up."

"I doubt it," answered John, "but you can try."

Jesse's letter was as restrained as an emotional individual could write. He denied being a member of the Locofoco party, and he denied voting for Cushing. He said that Garrison had been misinformed and that, as a result, "my name has been cruelly dragged before the public." He concluded by asking Garrison to deny the charges he had made.

Garrison responded in the *Liberator* by repeating his original statements and adding others. By this time the troupe were in Philadelphia. More and more editors entered the controversy until, by May, the Hutchinsons were beside themselves. Should they stop their antislavery singing? This would be a public admission that they were not stanch abolitionists. Or should they continue to support abolition, which would open them to the charge of being two-faced? They decided upon the latter.

Returning to New York after singing in Baltimore and Washington, the Hutchinsons attended the American Anti-Slavery Society anniversary meeting at the Minerva Rooms. They slipped quietly into the hall without attracting notice, and when the speaker had finished they rose and burst suddenly into *The Slave's Appeal*.

Wendell Phillips immediately got up and intoned pompously that he was glad indeed to hear the song if it was to be regarded as a sign of repentance, but not otherwise. If the Hutchinsons were repentant, he wished them to so signify.

Jesse started to rise, but John pulled him back, saying, "Let's sing *Liberate the Bondman*." Before Phillips could object, the words, taken from the *Liberator*, filled the hall.

Feebly the bondman toiled,
Sadly, he wept—
Then to his wretched cot
Mournfully crept:
How doth his free-born soul
Pine 'neath his chain!

Slavery! Slavery!

Dark is thy reign.

When, when, oh Lord! will right

Triumph o'er wrong?

Tyrants oppress the weak,

Oh Lord! how long?

Hark! hark! a peal resounds

From shore to shore—

Tyranny! Tyranny!

Thy reign is o'er.

“When we ceased singing,” wrote John, “the assembly was in tears. Our victory over critics was complete. Phillips grasped his hat and, springing to the platform, swung it over his head as he shouted: ‘Three cheers for the Hutchinsons!’”

Our Motto's "Go Ahead"

PLEASED as they were by their triumph at the anti-slavery meeting in New York, the Hutchinsons uneasily read in the incidents of their recent tours a sign that perhaps they had passed the peak of their success in the East. So once more John's thoughts turned westward.

Since before the troupe's trip to England, the lure of the West had gnawed at John, and he had kept promising himself that someday he would cross the mountains. He wanted to see the Ohio and the Wabash, to cross the Mississippi and its great valley, and to light his campfires on the prairie plains beyond.

Feeling that this was the time to realize his dream, he persuaded his brothers and Abby to the idea and in long conferences with them worked out a possible itinerary.

When John broached the plan to Fanny, she demurred. A western trip would keep him away too long, she said, and he ought not to be so far away when Baby Viola was so sickly with fever. But in the end she agreed to the notion, as she always did, because there was nothing else to do. Like the wives of the other brothers, she had long ago accepted the fact that the Hutchinson boys would never stay at home in the usual manner of husbands. The love of travel had so got into their blood that they could not stay long in any one place.

So in September 1848 the quartet left for their first trans-Allegheny tour. Jesse was to join them later in Cincinnati. John was both delighted and sad at the moment of going. For years he had dreamed of trailing the western sun, yet he was loath to uproot himself from the security of his beloved New Hampshire hills and from the affections of his family.

"We have to leave home," he wrote morosely in his diary,

"separate ourselves from home friends and wander out into the world to meet and form new associations and friendships. There is something about it sad to my mind, especially the uncertainty of meeting those at home again in this world. Yes, it is sad to leave father and mother and all the home scenes, to die out West, or have them die before we return. Life is uncertain."

Despite his lamentations, he thoroughly enjoyed the trip. On the cars from Rome to Syracuse Judson feigned insanity and John acted as his keeper. The other passengers were both horrified and fascinated. The brothers met a conductor who took them squirrel hunting, and in Buffalo they grabbed shovels from road workers just to prove the Hutchinsons knew how to handle tools. They frolicked and played pranks, rode in two-horse carriages and behind four-horse teams, and made so much commotion that street urchins shouted, "There go the Hutchinsons!"

At Niagara Falls, "roaring, foaming cataract," John paddled in shallow eddies and turned sentimental in his diary. "The mist that rises from thy spray is caught up in the clouds and in the round of time comes again with other waters to fall over thy brows. Thou flood of living water, roll on!"

In Buffalo, after they returned from a brief excursion into Canada, Asa noticed an advertisement announcing a concert by the Alleghanians. Judson suggested that the two groups sing together. It seemed a perfect arrangement, but the Alleghanians soon left Buffalo and took with them many of the Hutchinsons' favorite songs, which they later introduced as their own.

Moving on west to Cleveland, the Hutchinsons found that news of their arrival had gone before them. "This band of sweet singers," announced the Forest City's *Daily True Democrat* on September 27, 1848, "is on its way to the West. . . . This will be their first trip to the west, and thousands for the first time will have an opportunity to hear their unequalled minstrelsy."

John advertised the first concert for November 15 in Empire Hall. If in Buffalo their songs took "like cold bread," in Cleveland they went like hot cakes. Carriages and wagons brought

hundreds from Elyria and from Oberlin, a liberal antislavery community, came scores more. Empire Hall overflowed, commented one editor, adding: "We like their music, because it is so simple and unadorned. It may not please those whose nice and critical taste love to hear music executed so that there is no music in it, but the people, the millions, appreciate their notes for Liberty and the Right."

When the Chicago *Tribune* invited the troupe to come to Chicago, John was tempted, but he declined the invitation. He was anxious to visit his mother's brother, Kendrick Leavitt, in Cincinnati and to meet Jesse there as they had planned. The troupe arrived in the Queen City late in November and on the evening of their first day sang to a thousand persons in Melodeon Hall. Across the beautiful Ohio lay the village of Covington in the slave state of Kentucky.

"I want to sing in Kentucky," said Jesse to Kendrick. "I want to sing all our abolitionist songs. They'll know what it means when the Hutchinsons sound off."

Kendrick Leavitt laid aside his pipe. He had been a lumber dealer in Cincinnati for years and had grown fond and tolerant of his Kentucky neighbors. "Do you think it wise?" he asked.

"Our motto's 'Go Ahead,'" answered Jesse. "No slaver has stopped us yet."

Leavitt explained. "You see, it's this way. Cincinnati isn't the North and it isn't the South. It's a sort of hybrid city, part southern and part northern. We mostly aim to live and let live." He tapped his briar, hoping the point would sink home. It didn't. Wishing his sister's children had remained in New Hampshire, he tried again.

"There's a little of everything mixed up in Cincinnati. Mostly we're Westerners, not Southerners or New Englanders." He sighed. "I sort of wish you wouldn't muddy things up."

Asa spoke crisply. He had no patience with all this talk of Cincinnati not being one thing or another. And couldn't a Westerner be against slavery, same as a man from Massachusetts? "Don't worry, Uncle Kendrick, you don't have to go with us."

"That suits me mighty fine." Leavitt got up, put his pipe in his pocket, and walked briskly out. He hoped none of his customers ever connected him with these New Hampshire hot-heads.

A chartered steamer took the troupe across the Ohio, and they trotted ashore at the Covington landing aglow with self-righteousness. No sooner had they hit Kentucky soil than they started to sing. The music rolled up over the levee into warehouses and jerry-built sheds. Merchants clapped on hats and strolled down to the waterfront to hear the racket. A few Negro urchins, their eyes rolling, edged up cautiously. The Hutchinsons were singing *Hark! I Hear the Sound of Anguish*.

Hark! I hear the sound of anguish,
In my own, my native land;
Brethren, doomed in chains to languish,
Lift to heaven the suppliant hand,
And despairing, and despairing,
Death the end of woe demand.

Those in bonds we would remember,
As if we with them were bound;
For each crushed, each suffering member
Let our sympathies abound,
Till our labors,
Spread the smiles of freedom round.

That evening, when the tribe presented a formal concert, Covington residents and a few students from the Western Baptist Theological College and Dr. Orr's Female Seminary applauded them heartily, but gave little from their pockets. "Well, that Kentucky is a human place," wrote a northern editor, "and as soon as slavery is abolished there, it will be humaner. Honor to the Kentuckians for their applauding welcome to the Free Soil, anti-war, liberty-loving Hutchinsons!"

The Hutchinsons were learning to move fast, to tip the till in a town and then get away quickly to make another one-night stand. They were obsessed with the importance of their mis-

sion, and they also were learning to appreciate money more and more for its own sake.

So in rapid succession they gave concerts in Dayton, Springfield, and Columbus. The selections presented on December 12 in the Buckeye capital were typical of the troupe's western programs.

Part First

The Cot Where We Were Born

MELODY BY HEATH

ARRANGED BY THE HUTCHINSONS

QUARTETTE

The Old Church Bell

MELODY BY RUSSELL

ARRANGED BY THE HUTCHINSONS

QUARTETTE

The Indian Hunter

WORDS BY ELIZA COOK

MELODY BY HUTCHINSONS

SONG

My Mother's Bible

WORDS BY G. P. MORRIS

MUSIC BY HUTCHINSONS

QUARTETTE

Part Second

The Mountaineer

WORDS BY MARSHALL

ARRANGED BY HUTCHINSONS

CANTATA—SECOND PART

QUARTETTE

The May Queen

WORDS BY ALFRED TENNYSON

MUSIC BY W. R. DEMPSTER

QUARTETTE

Pauper's Funeral

MUSIC BY HUTCHINSONS

QUARTETTE

Excelsior

WRITTEN BY H. W. LONGFELLOW

MUSIC BY HUTCHINSONS

QUARTETTE

Part Third

There's A Good Time Coming

POETRY BY CHARLES MACKAY

MUSIC BY HUTCHINSONS

QUARTETTE

Descriptive Song: *The Ship on Fire*

MUSIC BY RUSSELL

Congressional Song: *Eight Dollars a Day*

WORDS BY JESSE

MUSIC BY JUDSON HUTCHINSON

Finale: *The Old Granite State*

Late in December the troupe took the boat upriver from Cincinnati. For more than four hundred miles the Ohio twisted and turned before Pittsburgh came into view at the confluence of the Allegheny and Monongahela rivers. And there Judson suddenly put an end to the concert tour. He announced that he was going home and would never again sing with the troupe. He was tired of the West, he said, and was "scairt" of the cholera, which was reported to be epidemic along the river. When Jesse sought to dissuade him, he only became more obstinate and finally set out for home over the primitive frontier roads.

The remainder of the troupe went on to Philadelphia and from there took their separate ways homeward. Judson's action had only precipitated the end of the tour. Asa too was anxious to get back to Milford. His wife Elizabeth was nearing her time, and he wanted to be home when the baby arrived. His daughter Abby was born on March 14, 1849.

For her part Sister Abby was impatient to get to New York. There the year before, a good-looking young businessman had been introduced to her after a concert. He complimented her on her singing, and a casual friendship soon ripened into romance. Ludlow Patton, rapidly on his way to earning a fortune as a Wall Street broker, came from a distinguished Scotch-Irish family. His father, the Reverend William Patton, was one of

the founders of Union Theological Seminary and in 1848 was pastor of New York's Hammond Street Congregational Church. Opposed to slavery and the traffic in alcohol, Reverend Patton thoroughly approved of Abby's liberal tendencies. His son, no doubt, was less interested in her politics. He saw a gentle, lovely girl of eighteen years, with full, red lips, expressive eyes, and abundant brown hair parted in the middle and brushed back from a high forehead in careless waves that partly concealed shapely ears.

When Abby reached New York, Ludlow was waiting. Within a few days Abby set her wedding date for February 28, and then went to Milford to make her preparations. The ceremony was performed at the home of the groom's father, "with all the guests signing the marriage certificate as witnesses, after the manner of Friends." The honeymoon was spent in Milford, near the Souhegan and against the background of New Hampshire hills that Abby loved.

The inevitable effect of these events on the career of the Hutchinson Family as a singing troupe did not immediately become apparent. In March the quartet sang in New York, Brooklyn, and upstate cities, and they spent the remainder of 1849 touring along the Atlantic seaboard, principally in New England communities. They even introduced two new songs, Jesse's *Good Old Days of Yore* and Judson's comic *The High Standing Collar*.

As standing collars are all the rage,
We wish to keep up with the pace of the age,
But we knew not how high the fashion would go,
So we thought we'd make 'em 8 inches or so.

The fashions all change as the seasons come round,
And he who don't keep them up is often put down.
He is laugh'd at, and scouted by greater and smaller,
Who know not the worth of a very wide collar.

Invariably after singing the last verse Judson would stride to the front, make a deep bow, and recite: "In order not to get

in a passion, we must cease from eating pork, chewing tobacco, drinking coffee or rum, for all these tend to passion; but we must live on the pure grains and fruits, milk and honey, and then if we like we can 'get a wide collar and be in the fashion.'"

Audiences, uncertain whether this plea was sincere or a burlesque on the reformers of the day, cheered and clapped and never bothered to find out just what Judson meant.

Gradually the solidarity of the original Aeolian troupe was breaking up. Abby's marriage, unlike her brothers', interfered with her going on tour; Judson's growing peculiarities made him less and less predictable; and Asa, John, and Jesse frequently were preoccupied with family affairs. Now and again three or four of the brothers would arrange to take a singing trip together, but sometimes John had to tour alone. It was becoming more and more difficult for the family to perform as a unit. Events in 1851 accelerated the disintegration of the troupe.



The fateful year began with two births: a daughter to Jesse and Susannah on January 16, and a son to Asa and Elizabeth on February 4.

Then, while John was away on a short concert trip, came the news that Father Jesse was ill. The old man had excited himself over the burning of a neighbor's barn, had caught cold while attempting to help, and a few days later had suffered a paralytic stroke. He died on February 10 and was laid to rest in the family plot. Judson, Andrew, and Joshua spoke at the funeral services, and the coffin was carried to the graveyard by ten sons.

As if this were not grief enough, on September 10 Jesse's wife died in Lynn, just eleven days before the death of her only living child, eight months old. In thirteen years Jesse had lost five sons, a daughter, and his wife. He was crushed and now cared little what became of Old High Rock or of the singing troupe.

"It's goin' to be my turn next," he said to John.

"Nonsense, Jess."

"Yes, it is. I feel it."

John had no answer, for almost without realizing it, he had been drawing closer and closer to spiritualism as practiced by Judson and Abby. Now Jesse was embracing the cult. He sought the advice of the spirits to guide him to treasure buried by pirates near Old High Rock, and for days he drilled and dug and tunneled as spiritualist mediums directed. But he never found the bones of Tom Veal, debonair pirate chief, nor did he ever locate any chests of pieces of eight.

High Rock, however, became a spiritualist sanctuary. Professional mediums and amateur clairvoyants gathered there to practice their mumbo-jumbo for evoking the angels. On one occasion High Rock was turned over to one of the nation's foremost spiritualists, Andrew Jackson Davis. Editor of the *Herald of Progress*, a newspaper devoted to the discovery and application of "truth," and publisher of twenty-six books on the occult, Davis assembled at Old High Rock a spiritual congress to which came phantom representatives from China, Persia, Japan, Turkey, Greece, Italy, Germany, Russia, Austria, Sweden, and Italy. There were "delegates" from Switzerland, Spain, Mexico, France, Scotland, England, Ireland, Africa, and America, including the native Indian. Other distinguished "guests" included Solon and St. John.

Judson listened avidly as Davis explained the causes and cures of insanity. He listed fourteen contributive causes, including physical overexertion, excessive eating and drinking, protracted enthusiasm or joy, continued suspense of mind, and anxiety, but he told Judson that insanity was a hereditary disease, which "like the symptoms of consumption and cancer, may be roused to full development by the disobedience of organic or mental laws."

It was not long after this that the four brothers started out for a second tour of the West. No sooner had the steamer *Queen City* unloaded them in Cleveland than they sought out a group of spiritualists. John, Jesse, and Judson spent evening after

evening with "rappers" and mediums. On one such evening a clairvoyant told Judson that some spirits in heaven were magnetizing him. "Judson seemed very much excited and was happy," wrote John in his diary. "He wanted to go home to heaven. He saw the blessed spirits, heard the music of heaven, the harps, etc. He was recalled, but was quite bewildered with excessive joy."

As the days passed, Judson grew worse, shivering and trembling and refusing to sing comic songs. He stopped chewing tobacco. One evening, without invitation, he entered the house of a dying girl, made passes across her chest to relieve her pain, and magnetized water to pour over her. That night he called aloud for Jesus Christ and got out of bed to preach in an empty hallway for an hour.

John was beside himself with anxiety. There was little use consulting Jesse, for he was almost as hysterical as Judson. So John turned to Asa.

"What are we goin' to do?"

"I reckon we better take 'em both home. Jess will come out of it all right I think, but I'm worried about Jud."

"There's a boat for Buffalo tomorrow afternoon at two."

"Let's catch her," said Asa.

The trip was a nightmare. Judson fought and screamed and attempted to throw himself overboard. His cunning taxed the ingenuity of his brothers. Finally they subdued him by brute force and locked him in a cabin. On the train from Buffalo to Syracuse he again attempted suicide; he was in such an "unnatural state" that it took four men to secure him. Finally he was quieted with anodynes. From Milford Judson was taken to the Worcester asylum for treatment. Jesse gradually improved at home.

When Judson was discharged from the hospital two months later and once more began singing with the family, the "whimsical" workings of his mind caused the troupe great embarrassment. Sometimes in the middle of a concert he would interrupt to preach "as if inspired"; at other times he gave hysterically

comic readings or, more often, lectured the audience on the sinfulness of eating meat or of wearing clothes made from dead animals. He himself discarded the use of boots and shoes, appearing in his stocking feet. He ate only fruits, cereals, and honey. Once in Newburyport he impulsively decided to help the poor and during the concert tossed handfuls of silver half dollars into the audience. Yet, as John pointed out, his idiosyncrasies were harmless enough and never seriously shocked the public.

More than once John confided to his diary that it might be best to disband the troupe and return to farming. But he didn't want to give up singing. Desperate, he sought Asa's advice.

"Shall we go to New York, rent the Tabernacle, and strike new blows for abolition?"

Asa nodded. "We might as well. There's nothing to be gained here at home, an' our motto's 'Go Ahead.'"

But they found Gotham a strange and unfriendly place. New Yorkers, once ardent Hutchinson fans, were apathetic. The impression had seeped through the city that the singers were a little queer. Popular taste was weary of the same old songs of righteous reform, sung to the same old tunes. No longer were the Hutchinsons original in either their style of singing or their themes. Innumerable groups similar to them were on the road: the Alleghanians, Bakers, Spencers, Continentals, Father Kemp's Old Folks Choir, the Bliss Family, the Marvin Family, the Mountain Vocalists, and half a dozen more.

All these were struggling against the competition offered by the great minstrel troupes that spiced their programs with fun, wisecracking end men, and jolly songs of romantic love sung to the twang of the banjo. Buckley's minstrels and those of Christy, Wood, and White were not only stealing the show from the family groups, but were so bold and sure of their success that they could ridicule the Hutchinsons and the Bakers in public.

John noticed sorrowfully that the better class of New York-

ers no longer came to hear the Hutchinsons. Newspapers made the same observation. "The audience," wrote one editor, "was composed of people of color, white-cravated Abolitionists, moral reformers, Grahamites, temperance lecturers, with a large sprinkling of women of varied situations, whose faces, from exposure in the great cause of moral reform, bear a striking affinity to an old hide well exposed to the weather on a crooked fence. As near as 'a man of the world' could judge, seven-eighths of this family are now engaged in procuring flannel shirts and moral tracts for every new born nigger baby."

To attract more persons, Judson insisted that the troupe reduce its concert prices from fifty cents to twelve and a half cents, but this decrease only accelerated the falling off in attendance. Admission charges then were returned to their previous level, and for some strange reason the crowds increased somewhat again, to a high of twelve hundred persons at a single performance.

Many came to hear three new songs the family were singing for the first time in New York. These were *Hol For California*, originally composed in 1849 as a farewell song for a company of Massachusetts gold-seekers; the *Congressional Song of Eight Dollars a Day*, a lampoon on the habits and manners of Washington political life; and *Uncle Sam's Farm*, a tuneful, patriotic selection, without too much sectionalism, that rapidly became a national favorite.

Of all the mighty nations in the East or in the West,
The glorious Yankee nation is the greatest and the best;
We have room for all creation, and our banner is unfurled,
With a general invitation to the people of the world.

Then come along, come along, make no delay,
Come from every nation, come from every way;
Our lands they are broad enough, don't feel alarm,
For Uncle Sam is rich enough to give us all a farm.

St. Lawrence is our Northern line, far's her waters flow,
And the Rio Grande our southern bound, way down to Mexico;

While from the Atlantic ocean, where the sun begins to dawn,
We'll cross the Rocky Mountains far away to Oregon.

While the South shall raise the cotton, and the West the corn and
pork,
New England manufacturers shall do up the finer work;
For the deep and flowing water-falls that course along our hills,
Are just the thing for washing sheep and driving cotton mills.

Our fathers gave us liberty, but little did they dream
The grand results to follow in this mighty age of steam;
Our mountains, lakes, and rivers, are now in a blaze of fire,
While we send the news by lightning on the Telegraphic wire.

While Europe's in commotion, and her monarchs in a fret
We're teaching them a lesson which they never can forget;
And this they fast are learning, Uncle Sam is not a fool,
For the people do their voting, and the children go to school.

The brave in every nation are joining heart and hand,
And flocking to America, the real promised land;
And Uncle Sam stands ready with a child upon each arm,
To give them all a welcome to a lot upon his farm.

A welcome, warm and hearty, do we give the sons of toil,
To come to the West and settle and labor on Free Soil;
We've room enough and land enough, and they needn't feel alarm—
O! come to the land of Freedom and vote yourself a farm.

Yes! we're bound to lead the nations, for our motto's "*Go Ahead*,"
And we'll carry out the principles for which our fathers bled;
No monopoly of Kings and Queens, but this is the Yankee plan,
Free Trade to Emigration and Protection unto man.



Even with an increase in patronage, John was dissatisfied. He knew the Hutchinsons, by any standards, were the foremost band of family singers in America. He thought it still was possible to combine reform causes with money-making, but he was realistic enough to see that the troupe had lost its pulling power

in the great cities of the East. "City audiences," he wrote, "are notoriously fickle. They want something new all the time. We ought to go West again."

In this mood, after Judson had received additional treatment in Dr. Wesselhoeft's Water-Cure Establishment at Brattleboro, Vermont, John took his brothers for a six-week swing around a western circuit. Abby, not wishing to leave her broker husband, refused to accompany them. The trio sang in Cleveland, then moved south to Cincinnati, where they again fretted Uncle Kendrick with their violent antislavery leanings, and went aboard a river boat for Louisville and St. Louis.

Lovelier than John had expected, the Ohio, as if proud of its fleet of wood-burning, white-trimmed boats, corkscrewed its steady way between islands hung with summer greenery and daintily threaded a course between the slave soil of Kentucky on its left and the free land of Indiana on the right. Aloof on the bridge, the captain and his pilot, a taciturn Hoosier, navigated as if carrying a cargo of pork, bacon, tobacco, whiskey, and flour from Cincinnati to St. Louis were child's play.

Endless tales of river pirates, cholera, and California gold, spaced with impromptu concerts, whittled away long hours before the boat docked at St. Louis's bustling waterfront. Drawling Southerners, quick-spoken Buckeyes, and nasal-voiced Hoosiers mixed their untrained voices with the Yankee speech of the Hutchinsons. A sort of easy tolerance developed among the passengers, so that antislavery songs and tunes of the plantations were received equally well. Even the Hutchinsons were touched with unaccustomed mellowness, so that they preferred to select comic and sentimental numbers rather than abolitionist music.

News of their violent antislavery stand, however, had preceded them to St. Louis; the newspapers attacked them bitterly and no public hall was available to them. John said the mayor, "like a furious cur," doubled his fist and threatened: "You are abolitionists; you have no business here; we will give you no protection. Get out of the city as quick as you can."

For once the troupe bowed to destiny and started up the Mississippi on the way to Chicago. The Windy City welcomed them heartily, and the *Chicago Tribune* emphasized their "martyrdom" at St. Louis. Nonetheless, Asa was restless. On the Mississippi he had met Amos Tuck, an old friend from New Hampshire, who was returning from Minnesota Territory. Tuck's tales of that exciting land whetted the Hutchinsons' appetites, and, urged on by Asa, the boys turned westward again to visit the territory before returning home. They got as far as Racine, Wisconsin, when Judson suddenly decided he wanted to turn back.

On the way home the troupe sang again in Chicago and then pushed on to Detroit and Cleveland. As always, the Clevelanders turned out to welcome them and to approve their abolitionist songs. The Forest City seemed more liberal and alert than Cincinnati, and much as John loved the romance of the Ohio, he enjoyed the broad sweep of Lake Erie even more. "The breath of freedom blows o'er these waters," he exclaimed joyfully after settling himself in the comfortable home of Theodore S. Severance, whose liberal wife had adopted the trousered Bloomer costume. John was intrigued by the garment's modesty and utility and immediately sent a pattern home to his wife.

In the Western Reserve, throbbing with liberalism and reform, the Hutchinsons felt at ease for the first time in many weeks. Only a few miles away was Oberlin College, where, wrote John, "we found a true, radical spirit of reform, anti-slavery, temperance and woman's equality. I believe this the first college where a black man was recognized as a brother and both women and men could be educated and graduated together." Asa Mahan, a strong abolitionist who was said to have the "best mind West of the Mountains," welcomed the troupe to the college, where he was a professor and the editor of the *Oberlin Evangelist*. The Hutchinsons found a friend also in Charles G. Finney, president of the college, a staunch abolitionist, and, like the singers, a strict Grahamite.

On the campus stood a huge tent, the Tabernacle, which

served for public meetings of all kinds. There the Hutchinsons sang their antislavery songs, and afterward played fox and geese on the college green with Oberlin students.

Especially gratifying was the eagerness with which these friends purchased copies of the Hutchinsons' songbook. The little paper volume, bound in dull green, ran to forty-eight pages and contained the words of forty-eight songs. Printed in New York in 1851 by Baker, Godwin & Co., it was priced at twenty-five cents, and the family sold it before and after concerts.

Four years later J. S. Potter & Co., in Boston, printed a second edition under the title *Book of Words of the Hutchinson Family*. It carried sixteen new songs, including the popular *Little Topsy's Song*, *The Lake of the Dismal Swamp*, *I'm Going Home*, *We've Left Again Our Mountain Home on the Granite Hills*, *Do A Good Turn When You Can*, and the enjoyable *Wishing Song*. There were also Lucy Larcom's *Call to Kansas*, Judson's *Jordan*, and John's *The Merry Yankee Boy*.

At an antislavery convention in Ravenna, a small community not far from Cleveland, the Hutchinsons sold eighty dollars' worth of their songbooks after singing about fifteen selections in a concert lasting an hour and a half. The numbers most generously applauded were *Uncle Sam's Farm*, which most Westerners thoroughly appreciated, and *Welcome to Jenny Lind*.

From the snow-clad hills of Sweden,
Like a bird of love from Eden,
Lo! she comes with songs of freedom—
Jenny comes from o'er the sea.

Though afar from home endearing,
Yet her heart no danger fearing,
For she hears a nation cheering—
"Jenny, welcome to the free!"

"We did it again," chortled Judson in great good humor when the troupe returned to the Severance residence. Then his face fell, as if at some unpleasant memory.

"You know," he continued sadly, "I wanted to sing West's comic song about Jenny Lind, an' John said I couldn't." A big tear slid down into the thicket of his spade beard.

"Now don't worry, Jud." Asa spoke soothingly. "That's not a very nice song for the public to hear. It doesn't compliment the Swedish Nightingale, you know."

"But I wanted to sing it," whimpered Judson.

Asa thought hard. It would not do to have an attack of the horrors come on now. "I tell you what, you sing it to me now."

Judson brightened at once. He sang loud and hard and sometimes used his ventriloquist talent to produce weird effects.

Oh! Manias we've had many,
And some have raised the wind;
But the most absurd of any
Has been that for Jenny Lind.
Causing quite a revolution
To complement her frame;
From a Toothpick to an Omnibus
All are call'd by her name.

If you step into a grocer's,
(Upon my word 'tis true!)
There is Jenny Lind Lump Sugar,
And Jenny's Cocoa too.
We shall all become great singers,
Though Jenny Lind pipes high;
At each Snuff shop in London,
Jenny Lind's pipes you may buy.

Jesse Sees the Elephant

THE death of his wife and infant daughter had left Jesse full of despair. For thirty-eight years his every promise of happiness had crumbled; his life had become a succession of disappointments, quarrels, and sorrows. All his children had died in infancy. He had seldom agreed with his brothers and Abby on finances. His personality had repeatedly clashed with John's. Even the spirits had failed him when he sought their aid in digging for treasure on Old High Rock. He was surely a man born to misfortune.

In this mood he was difficult to get along with. Asa and John wanted him to continue working with them, but his ideas of terms and arrangements were so unreasonable that agreeing to them was impossible. All chance of harmony among the brothers seemed gone.

Yet it was a shock to the boys when Jesse announced in December 1851 that he was leaving the family troupe to become the business manager of the talented rival quartet, the Alleghanians. "We still loved our brother and wished him success," wrote John, "but we were grieved."

Blinded by his own emotions, Jesse flung his full energies into promoting the Alleghanians and injuring the Hutchinsons. He booked concerts so that both groups sang in the same towns on the same nights. His concert announcements belittled the Hutchinsons, and his programs announced family songs originally introduced by the Aeolians. Both troupes suffered financially, and the public became completely confused.

Shrewd, clever, and emotional, Jesse gradually conceived the idea of taking the Alleghanians to San Francisco and the gold

camp of the Sacramento. There, in a new country where red-shirted miners rich in dust clamored for entertainment, he was sure he could make a fortune for the Alleghanians and for himself.

Not until he had carefully canvassed every possibility and weighed every argument did Jesse mention a California tour to the troupe. Then he gathered them together, spread a primitive map of the western coast on a hotel table, and boldly made his suggestion. Placing his spatulate finger directly upon the Golden Gate, he began his spiel, words cascading out, painting a picture of romance, adventure, and profits.

"There's four ways we can go," he concluded. "First, by sailing around the Horn; second by the overland trail; third by way of Panama; and fourth by way of Nicaragua. The last is the best and . . ."

"How do you know?" clipped James M. Boulard. A native of Massachusetts, the former primo basso of St. Peter's Church in New York was hardheaded. "It's too long and too far any way you figure it."

"It isn't too far for men," replied Richard Dunning, the tenor, "but it is for our soprano." Looking at Miss Miriam G. Goodenow, he wondered how a delicate girl with a fan comb in her hair and a cameo at her throat could ever endure the rigorous California trail.

She said nothing and neither did William H. Oakley, the troupe's alto. Jesse continued as if he had not been interrupted.

"San Francisco isn't like it was a year or two ago. Business is flourishing, and there are at least two large theaters. And the trip over Nicaragua is an easy, beautiful route. I can promise it'll be more like vacation than like work. And those miners do have money!"

Miriam Goodenow smiled. "If hundreds of females are able to stand the trip across the plains, I think I can manage a water route all right."

One by one the Alleghanians agreed, and Jesse set about planning final details.

Early in 1852 Jesse sent the troupe on a farewell tour through the principal cities of the East, and on March 20 he led them to the New York dock to board the *Daniel Webster* for Nicaragua. Piles of freight, cargo boxes and crates, and personal baggage were stacked shoulder-high on the wharf, and runners, clerks, and hawkers made an infernal din. Forty first-class passengers fought their way into cabins built to accommodate half that number. Jesse had difficulty in finding the cramped, box-like staterooms that he had reserved as "luxurious, spacious accommodations for gentlemen and ladies." The Alleghanians' luggage filled every inch of floor space, so that Miss Goodenow had to sit tailor-fashion on the hard shelf of her berth.

"The excessively crowded state of the steamer," wrote a California-bound businessman, "precludes nearly all chance for personal comfort; yet so anxious are all to get to the land of promise, no matter how, that good-nature, courtesy and reciprocal attentions, have made the inconveniences of no moment." The Alleghanians, to the great delight of the other passengers, made the tiresome trip pleasant with song. Yet all were glad when the *Daniel Webster*, eight days from New York, dropped anchor within the wide harbor of San Juan del Norte.

Native boatmen ferried Jesse's troupe from the ship to Greytown, the name given San Juan by most Americans. The town was flooded with stranded travelers, who milled and jostled on the dirt streets, fought for rooms in the United States Hotel, and outbid one another for accommodations in thatched huts. "This poor, barren and sandy town has scarcely a decent habitation for a human being," wrote Jesse in despair, "and yet here are huddled together some 800 passengers, and perhaps 200 residents. All these, in addition to the natives, who are as thick as muketoes, and live and thrive anywhere, sleep out-of-doors or in their little wigwams, without complaint or suffering."

Determined to leave Greytown as soon as possible, Jesse faced another obstacle. Nicaragua's dry season had set in, and the San Juan River was too low for boats to navigate all the

way to Fort San Carlos on the eastern shore of Lake Nicaragua. Finally the determined Jesse put the Alleghanians aboard a river craft. They would go by water as far as possible.

"Picture to yourself," he wrote in his journal, "a boat about a hundred feet in length by twelve or fourteen in breadth. The fire-room occupies about a third of her length forward, and the engine room nearly the same aft. Midship is a sort of cabin in the bottom of the hull, on a level with the water. In one corner a water-closet, *common to both sexes*; in another a miniature groggery; and in one of the remaining corners of this cabin a window opening into a small kitchen, where coffee, tea, and a few edibles were obtainable at enormous prices. Half of this small cabin is piled with baggage within a foot or two of the deck or ceiling, and upon these heaps of all-sized trunks, carpet-bags, etc, with the remaining space of not more than twelve by sixteen feet, were to sleep some thirty or forty ladies and as many children. The hurricane-deck, protected from the sun and heavy dews by an awning of light cotton cloth, forms the *grand saloon* for the male passengers."

Miss Goodenow endured the arduous one-hundred-sixty-mile journey from the Atlantic Coast to the Pacific remarkably well, although the dreaded fever stalked the party persistently. Thousands of black, brown, and gray monkeys amused her with their comic gymnastics and their almost human capers. They leaped from limb to limb, "catching and swinging themselves violently, suspended by the tail, grinning and chattering, and screaming in jubilant mockery to the pitiful gold-diggers, in whom they seem to recognize a degeneration of their own species." Deep red *lignum vitae* and caoutchouc tangled with huge red and yellow flowers, and the sky was bright with tropical birds of brilliant plumage and strange song. Now and again, long-snouted alligators lazed sluggishly in the crystalline waters of Lake Nicaragua.

At Virgin Bay, a dirty little town with a dozen filthy taverns, the hot and dusty Alleghanians hoisted themselves on stubborn mules that plodded slowly along a straight forest road

through rolling hills, up a mountainside, and then gradually down to San Juan del Sur on the Pacific shore.

Travel-worn, dirty, and hungry, the Alleghanians settled down here, amid another welter of humanity, to await a boat for San Francisco. They cooked their meals on the burning sands, slept where they could, and cheered one another's flagging spirits. Jiggers tormented them. All around, wrote Jesse, were "scenes of dark despair." Dysentery, diarrhea, and fever and ague sapped strength and caused the death of many. The dying and the dead lay where they fell, and the living often envied them. Jesse visited the sick and dying and, when all primitive nursing failed, dug graves.

By April 19, thirty days after he had left New York, Jesse's spirits touched a new low, and he reached out for pen and paper to warn Americans at home who might be foolish enough to attempt the California journey. "If I had the power of persuasion to urge most of the California emigrants to remain at home, I should certainly use that power to the best of my ability. . . . You who are restless and discontented, and unsatisfied with the quiet of a home, and who might very properly leave your country for your country's good, if you have money in your pockets and some vital principles in your hearts, a sound constitution, and an insatiable desire to see the world, including the 'Elephant,' why, you may start for California." He said to bring cooking utensils, dried beef, ham, and plenty of ship bread. Thin clothing and crash towels were needed. "Bring also plenty of dimes—eight pass for a dollar."

When the troupe struggled aboard the steamer *Monumental City* three days later, they found conditions worse than on land. The whole ship was one vast hospital, with scarcely a foot of space on the entire deck that was not covered with the sick. Each day bodies of steerage passengers were buried at sea. Food was scarce and poorly cooked; coffee was made from salt water; beef was served from an animal that had been sick with the fever. Jesse described in verse the tribulations during the voyage.

A list of all our luxuries I can in a few words give,
And the public then can judge how sumptuously we live:
Besides our rancid butter, (as rancid as you please,)
The ship was stor'd, when sent to sea, with ten small Cheshire
cheese.

Of these, the officers and crew have eaten nearly all—
The passengers tasted cheese but once, (in vain for cheese they
call);

Two cases of green beans we had, one case of corn and beans,
One ditto of green peas besides, comprised our list of "greens."

One little case of raspberry jam, two ginger and two cherries;
One of cranberry sauce, preserves, and two of poor blackberries;
Add two small cases peaches, and one pineapple preserve,
Is all this great ship furnished five hundred men to serve.



On the evening of May 17, fifty-seven days after leaving New York, Jesse shepherded his singers ashore at San Francisco. Once more buoyant and confident, he looked admiringly about and wrote: "*Here* is the Eldorado! Behold, here is the city whose streets are paved with gold. *Here* is the finest climate under heaven, and the mountains and valleys teem with wealth—the animal, the vegetable, and the mineral. 'O come to the glorious West, and buy a *Golden Farm*!' That is what I say and what we sing."

Boulard sniffed. His rooming house windows looked out upon a wild, jerry-built city whose streets were ankle-deep with dust in summer or bottomless with sticky mud during the rainy season. Kearney Street, from California Street to the Plaza, was lined with wooden shops and saloons; not far away was Little Chile, a square of wooden huts, bounded on one side by a slimy bog and on another by sinks of stinking offal. The harbor was filled with ships of every description—steamers, schooners, whalers, and even Oriental junks. And everywhere

were men and women with strange faces and stranger costumes: tattooed natives from the Sandwich Islands, solemn Chinamen, slovenly Chileans, red-shirted miners, and mustachioed gamblers.

Jesse spent a few days roaming the streets and experiencing the temperament of the town. A recently printed city map guided him through swank residential districts, to shanty sections, and into bustling lanes of commerce. At the corner of Battery and Pine streets stood the wholesale house of Gibson and Meyer. From its wide doors drifted the odors of pork, coffee, and tobacco. Jesse lingered to inspect barrels of oysters and kegs of rye, bourbon, and Scotch malt. Other casks held apple, peach, or cherry brandy. Clerks at Shirley and Bagley's were hammering lids off boxes that were packed with assorted bar tumblers and decanters. Around the corner dressmakers and milliners were advertising a good assortment of styles and bonnets "of the latest New York fashion."

Each evening Jesse threaded Pacific Street, cautious to avoid the "numerous dancehouses and rum-mills filled with half-dressed and slovenly looking women of every color known and with bloated loafers." Soon he reached the theaters. At the Jenny Lind flamboyant posters announced a showing of "Romeo and Juliet"; at the American Theatre "The Stage Struck Barber" was enjoying a profitable run; at the Theatre of Varieties Paul Emmers' one-mile panorama of California attracted a crowd. It was the Adelphi Theatre on Dupont Street, however, before whose façade Jesse lingered longest. He finally rented it for the Alleghanians' San Francisco première.

He saw to it that each city newspaper announced the arrival of the troupe, and he took special pains to chat with editors. At the office of the *Herald* he proved his abilities as a printer by stepping to a case and setting up a letter, then locking it in a form and printing it on a small job press. This circular was sent to friends in the States. Abby kept hers for years.

Jesse's geniality and his talents as a printer resulted in excellent press notices. His handbills always were delivered on time, and his programs were set with care.

On the balmy evening of May 24, swarms of citizens patiently pushed into the Adelphi, paying three dollars for the privilege of sitting in a box, two dollars for a seat in the parquet, and one for a place in the gallery. It was a "highly respectable" audience, commented the *Alta California*, and included a large number of "our most lovely and intelligent ladies." When the quartet filed onto the stage, thunderous applause greeted them.

From the first note the program was a success. The Alleghanians, true to their announcement that the concert would include numerous songs of home and Yankeeland, sang *The Good Old Folks at Home*, *The Farmer in His Easy Chair*, *Where Shall the Soul Find Rest*, and *Uncle Sam's Farm*. Miss Goodenow's two solos, *Kathleen Mavourneen* and *Ben Bolt*, touched heartstrings with their haunting melodies and their romance.

The second concert, two nights later, featured the stirring *Ship on Fire*, so enjoyed by Lincoln, and proved beyond all doubt that San Francisco appreciated chaste music as well as vulgar ditties. The theater was so crowded that latecomers were denied even standing room. When the third concert was announced for the evening of May 29, the Alleghanians were the talk of the town. Miss Goodenow's appearance on the stage was the signal for a shower of bouquets, and her presence in the dining rooms of hotels and restaurants brought rousing ovations.

Encouraged by the mounting profits shown in his carefully kept account book, Jesse rented the magnificent Jenny Lind Theatre, which, despite fire and disaster, had given San Franciscans a long series of brilliant entertainments such as the West had never before known. There the Alleghanians presented four successful concerts, the first on June 1 and the last on the twelfth.

To Jesse, however, San Francisco was only a gateway to the rich mines of the Sacramento. "We must begin singing here," he noted in his journal, "but as soon as possible we go inland—where the gold is."

The placers, from which men from every state in the Union took thousands of dollars in gold dust daily, lay up the Sacramento within reach of the north and south forks of the American River and near the Fever River. On his map Jesse penciled off a rough area somewhat less than fifty miles square. Its four corners were marked by Sacramento on the southwest; Placerville on the southeast; Nevada City on the northeast; and Yuba City and Marysville on the northwest. Within this square he planned to concentrate his programs. But before actually invading the region of the Mother Lode, he sought to gauge the miners' taste in song, since music that appealed to a San Francisco audience might not suit the thousands who flirted with Lady Luck along the Beaver River, or at Whiskey Slide, Iowa Hill, or Michigan Bluff.

So Jesse clad himself in his best—silk waistcoat, stylish trousers, and coat with velvet lapels—and each evening made the rounds of music palaces and gambling houses. The "wail of torture" from innumerable musical instruments cut from all quarters through the fog and darkness. Full bands, each playing a different tune, paraded in front of principal establishments, mingling their sounds into one earsplitting, brazen chaos.

Inside, the miner-thronged gambling houses were hung with colored calico and made bright with paintings and mirrors. Bars were redolent with the fumes of wines, spirits, and tobacco. The El Dorado was an immense room whose roof was supported by two rows of white polished pillars. On all sides hanging astral lamps rivaled the vivid brightness of day and illuminated pictures of nudes, bathing nymphs, and frantic bacchanals, "adapted to inflame the mind and calculated, in addition to the music, to seduce the passers-by to enter."

In the Aguila d'Ora Jesse found a band of Negro serenaders

beating banjos, rattling bones, and shouting the melodies of *O Susanna* and *Carry Me Back to Ole Virginny*. These songs, he noted, were universally popular in California, and the crowd of listeners was often so great as to embarrass players at the monte tables and injure the business of elegant gamblers. He learned that musicians were paid sixteen dollars a night; that a Swiss organ girl had accumulated four thousand dollars in five or six months; that miners were notoriously softhearted and enjoyed songs of tender sentimentality about those they had left behind them. He concluded that the Alleghanians need not alter their programs to be successful up the Sacramento.

It was only a short trip on the new river boat *Sophie* to Stockton, a thriving community at the head of the tidewaters on the San Joaquin River. In 1849 it was a canvas town of a thousand inhabitants, who thought nothing of paying six thousand dollars for a lot eighty by a hundred feet and fifteen thousand dollars to build an ordinary, one-story clapboard house. Jesse shepherded the Alleghanians into the Weber House, the only respectable hotel. They gave their first concert on June 18, and once again Jesse learned that miners loved songs of home and mother.

From Stockton the troupe moved northward to Sacramento, where they really caught the restless spirit of the mining country for the first time. River streets, lined with saloons, fandango halls, and gambling houses, were crowded day and night with bearded men from the placers. As in San Francisco, every type of music blasted from gin palaces, and impromptu quartets bawled bawdy songs.

During the first twenty-eight days of July, Jesse kept his company constantly on the move northward from Sacramento to Marysville and thence eastward along the Yuba River to Grass Valley, a raw town where the Gold Hill mine, the Empire mine, and the North Star mine were yielding millions. Between 1850 and 1857 the Gold Hill mine alone produced four million dollars. Men with pistols strapped at their sides stood guard over assayers' offices.

Sometimes the troupe traveled by river boat, occasionally on muleback, and now and again by lumbering Concord stage. Wherever an audience could be collected, the Alleghanians sang, and not infrequently the cradle-rockers sang to them impromptu ditties with silly airs and words that satirized Eldorado itself. In Grass Valley Jesse heard for the first time the popular California tune *Seeing the Elephant*, sung to the minstrel air *De Boatmen Dance*.

At first he had been puzzled by the expression "seeing the elephant," but even before leaving New York he had learned that it was a common phrase meaning to see all that is to be seen. It came into the literature in 1840 in A. B. Longstreet's *Georgia Scenes*. Now Jesse heard it applied to the gold fields.

When I left the States for gold,
Everything I had I sold;
A stove and bed, a fat old sow
Sixteen chickens and a cow.

On I traveled through the pines,
At last I found the northern mines;
I stole a dog, got whipt like hell,
Then away I went to Marysville.

I mined awhile, got lean and lank,
And lastly stole a monte-bank;
Went to the city, got a gambler's name
And lost my bank at the thimble game.

When the elephant I had seen,
I'm damned if I thought I was green;
And others say, both night and morn,
They saw him coming round the Horn.

In a crude saloon at Foster's Bar Jesse began a letter home. A single visit to Goodyear's Bar and Downieville, he wrote painstakingly, would treble repay all the expense of coming to California. But, he went on, thousands meet with many and sad disappointments. The country was "dangerous and uninviting" to those without fixed principles.

"Every nook and corner of the land," he wrote, "is lined with bar-rooms and gambling saloons, and the young man who comes here unguarded, has truly fallen into dangerous places. Though society is improving very fast, yet in the mining districts, so few are the real compacts of civilization, and so rare are the enjoyments and soothing influences of the society of women, (the mothers, and daughters, and sisters, and wives and sweethearts which characterize the land from which we came,) that many a young man here, in the anguish and agony of his heart, tries to drown his sorrows by every imaginable artifice and excitement—California is the rock on which the hopes and hearts of thousands are blasted and broken."

He complained bitterly of the poor fare served his troupe, saying there was plenty of meat, rich pastries, sausages, mince pies, coffee and poor tea, tobacco, and alcoholic drinks, but that in all his travels since leaving Sacramento he had not seen or heard of a loaf of unbolted white bread. Fever and ague and almost all manner of disease struck down thousands. Then "fights, and frolics, and duels, and dog-fights, and bull fights, and sham-fights, and fist-fights, and murders, and robberies, and arsons, petty thefts, and law-suits, and lynchings, and hangings, by Judge and Juries, or without them—are so prevalent through the land."

But he concluded his letter on a happier note. "In spite of all the clouds that surround us, I have the highest hopes for this blessed land. It is to be the garden of the world, and all the world will yet gather here."



Jesse's optimism was not entirely shared by the troupe, who were growing weary of primitive camps, of boisterous men who were more ruffian than civilized, and of makeshift concert halls. Yet, like thousands of other gold-seekers, they plodded on to try to make their fortunes.

When they returned from the northern mines to Sacramento,

Miss Goodenow met T. P. Robb, a handsome member of the Sacramento Common Council, who fell head over heels in love with her. Jesse had difficulty in persuading her to tour the southern mines, but until the end of August the Alleghanians perspired their way from one camp to another. Placerville's Main Street twisted along the winding banks of rock-lined Hangtown Creek. Up and down the creek hundreds of miners toiled at washing dirt, building cribs, and knocking together rough cradles. At night they came, sweaty and dirty, to applaud Miss Goodenow and occasionally to shower her with coins. She sang *Ben Bolt* and *Kathleen Mavourneen* until she wished they had never been written.

At Columba she fell ill, and Jesse thought he would have to cancel engagements in Greenwood Valley, Spanish Bar, Yankee Jim's, and Salmon Falls. In Fiddletown he tried unsuccessfully to find a doctor. "The Physicians in this country," he wrote dispiritedly, "are often criminally negligent of duty and actuated by the most sordid motives. I really feel grieved thus to write, but the Doctors generally are a curse to the people, and kill more than they save."

True to the Hutchinson tradition, Jesse preached the virtues of hydrotherapy and Grahamism. Had he possessed the necessary herbs, he would also have spread the doctrines of Thomson's botanic practice. He carried a supply of wheat in his wagon and advocated the use of bread and water and bathing and good air for sufferers from fever and ague. Always he found time to argue against the use of calomel and mercurial drugs. Sallow miners trembling with the "shakes" heard Jesse sing the Aeolians' famous anti-calomel song and then launch into a harangue about the virtues of proper diet.

Early in September the troupe returned to San Francisco. Jesse had succeeded in renting Armory Hall, a second-story auditorium on the corner of Washington and Sansome streets, where the San Francisco National Lancers drilled. There, in a room tastefully decorated with swords and lances, the troupe gave their first concert on September 13. It was a tremendous

success. Enthusiastic patrons purchased more copies of the Alleghanians' twenty-five-cent California songster than had ever been sold at a previous concert. Prospects were good for a renewed triumph.

Then, suddenly, Miss Goodenow fell ill again, and the other members of the troupe, dissatisfied with their manager's high-handed policies, refused to sing.

After this partial collapse of the troupe on September 16, 1852, Jesse tried his hand at printing in the office of the *San Francisco Journal*, Miss Goodenow announced her engagement to Robb, and the remaining singers idled away time. Now and again Jesse succeeded in booking one-night stands, but they were not particularly successful and Jesse was finally forced to admit that the gold country, always anxious for new attractions, had grown weary of the Alleghanians. New talent constantly was coming in from the East to amuse and titillate jaded appetites. Campbell's Minstrels, Catherine Hayes, and Signora Biscassianti were all playing to crowded audiences. Even a troupe of Chinese jugglers drew more patronage than did the Alleghanians.

During November the troupe got only a few engagements. On December 1 they sang to appreciative miners at Moqueleumme Hill. After that, however, Miss Goodenow retired to prepare for her wedding on the fifteenth. Boulard, Dunning, and Oakley booked passage on the *Pacific* for Nicaragua and went aboard immediately after the ceremony. Jesse and the bride and groom came down to the dock to wave them off.

That night Jesse returned to his shabby room with a heavy heart. He longed to be going home too. But he had made his decision and meant to stick with it. He was not going home until he had made his fortune in the mines.

For almost two months he wrestled with himself, torn between his desire to accumulate wealth and his great urge to return to the States. Finally he could stand it no longer. California, despite its allure, had brought him nothing but hard work and trouble. He was weary of its crudities, tired of its

money-madness, and fearful for his health. He reserved cabin space on the *Pacific* of the Vanderbilt Line for February 1 and sat down to write a pathetic farewell.

Here too, I've found afflictions, which I dreamed not of before,
And my footprints have been mark'd with grief, up and down
this western shore;
It was not gold I coveted, though gold was in my mind,
Yet more than all, my inmost prayer was goodwill to mankind.



The *Pacific*, like all ships running to and from San Francisco during the turbulent fifties, was jammed with humanity that fought and cursed for every inch of steerage space, for room on deck, and for the boxlike cells that passed as cabins. Luckily Jesse had reserved first-class cabin space well in advance. He had paid the Vanderbilt agent three hundred dollars for a ticket to San Juan del Sur and thence across Nicaragua to San Juan del Norte, where the *Pampero* would be waiting to take him to New Orleans. He had decided on the gulf port rather than New York because he had never seen Louisiana and because the trip to New Orleans was shorter by several days than that to New York. He wanted to set foot on American soil as quickly as possible.

Flinging his hand luggage into the cabin he was to share with three others, Jesse wormed his way on deck just as the ship churned away from Pacific wharf. Slowly San Francisco slid from view. Wharf and dock and winding streets disappeared until only the wooden semaphore high on Telegraph Hill remained, swinging its arms like a dancing skeleton. Finally it too dwindled, and Jesse was left with memories of bars and taverns, of Chinese in blue coolie suits and Mexicans in scarlet sashes and brilliant serapes, of whiskered miners carrying gold watches that weighed a pound, and of the Sacramento that promised so much and gave so little.

Combing his chin whiskers, Jesse stepped jauntily to the dining saloon, glad to be rid of the gold country and anxious to

catch sight of San Juan del Sur. "I never thought I'd want to see that miserable village again," he confided to a passenger, "but now I can hardly wait."

When finally he stepped ashore, the beach was a burning grate beneath his feet, with each sand grain a fiery coal. A string of mules waited listlessly. Soon the cavalcade was panting its way up from the coast to come at last to Lake Nicaragua, where boats waited to ferry passengers to the headwaters of the San Juan River.

But the river steamers were delayed by low water. For three days passengers fretted in incredible heat and filth, waiting for the Vanderbilt's "supplementary" boats to carry them to the Atlantic side. To kill time Jesse volunteered to return with a friend across the lake to find a trunk containing twenty thousand dollars in gold dust. By the time he got back, the river steamers had come and gone. Frantic, he rented a stinking craft poled by natives and started out for San Juan del Norte. He arrived half an hour after his ship had sailed!

He was the first aboard the *Daniel Webster* when she hove into the bay three weeks later. The trip to New Orleans was a nightmare. No sooner had he come aboard than Jesse began to feel a great lassitude, accompanied by a mounting thirst and a high fever. His stomach rebelled at the thought of food, and his head felt big as a barrel. The slapping of the waves against the ship's sides sounded to his delirious brain like a thousand drums beating. Strangers nursed him with brandy and with heroic doses of thirty grains of gum camphor, so that when he reached New Orleans, the fever was gone and his sunken eyes were clear.

He took passage on the *Wm. Noble* for Cincinnati. All the way up the Mississippi—past wicked Natchez and past Vicksburg in the land of cotton—he haunted the sunny spots on deck. Now it seemed he could never get warm. Even at midday he wore a blanket like a shawl over his thin shoulders. He kept straining his eyes for sight of Cincinnati. But time became more and more blurred, so that he confused Louisville with the

Queen City and insisted, in a feeble way, on trying to get off at the wrong port. His strength was almost gone when the steamer docked on April 2, 1853.

"Good God! What happened to you?" Kendrick Leavitt took one look at the weak creature a cab deposited at his door and led Jesse to bed.

Four days later John received a message from Cincinnati, saying that Jesse had arrived from the gold fields and was seriously ill with the fever. Immediately he began making preparations for the family to go to Cincinnati—and he sent advance notices to the Cincinnati newspapers that the Hutchinson Family would give a series of concerts beginning about May 15. Even after their arrival, they felt that Jesse's condition was not sufficiently serious to warrant canceling the programs they had scheduled.

Jesse's health became progressively worse. He was moved to Dr. E. A. Pease's water-cure establishment at Carthage about five miles from the city, and there, where "the purest and most salubrious atmosphere is always enjoyed" and where patients were promised "every advantage of all things that in any way conduce to health and comfort," he lingered until May 16. The next day public announcement was made of the indefinite postponement of the Cincinnati concerts because of "the sudden demise of one of the brothers." Jesse's body was sent to Lynn for burial.

A year later William Lloyd Garrison attended a séance given by Mrs. Leah Brown, one of the famous Fox sisters. Jesse Hutchinson was among the spirits supposedly evoked. He beat a march very true, remembered Garrison, and also beat time to tunes sung by the company. Then, after patting Garrison's hand in farewell, he vanished, never to reappear.

A Land Fairer Than Day

THE Hutchinsons somehow lost their enthusiasm after Jesse's death, even though they tried harder than ever to be their old sprightly selves. Discouraged and desperate, they even agreed to sing in the dissecting room of an Ohio medical college.

Asa sat late at night in scores of small western towns, adding, subtracting, and worrying over how to divide little by much and have enough cash left to pay carfare, hotel charges, and board bills. To make matters worse, little Viola, John's daughter, fell ill with scarlet fever; and on January 16, 1854, Brother Caleb passed away at the family home in Milford.

After the funeral the troupe again went on the road. Wherever John journeyed, he found slavery vigorously debated. Like a match tossed into a trash barrel, the signing of the Kansas-Nebraska Bill by President Pierce in May fired the issue anew. "This policy of deals, compromises, and debates," stormed John, "is leading straight to war for the winning of the West. Either the western territories will be free or they will be slave."

For weeks the brothers debated the problem. They watched with avid interest the organization of Kansas Emigrant Aid Societies to be sent from New England to vote for freedom in Kansas. To contribute something, no matter how little, the troupe composed a biting anti-Nebraska song, *The Nebraska Rascality*. It castigated Stephen A. Douglas, the Little Giant, in almost every verse.

Iniquity so very great,
Of justice so defiant,
Of course could emanate
From brain of mighty giant.

This giant now is mighty small,
And all of you do know, sirs;
But then there is no doubt at all
That he expects to grow, sirs.

So popular did this song become that Asa ordered it printed as a two-leaf pamphlet, and the troupe sold or gave away thousands of copies. Yet John continued to be restless. He felt confined and restricted in the East. The old yearning for the West seized him stronger than before. He reproached himself for not having accompanied Jesse to California, and he complained to patient Fanny that he was hobbled like a truant goat.

In August 1855 an agent for a Kansas emigrant company lectured in Lynn and invited Asa and John to sing. After the program John turned to Asa. "What do you think of it? Shall we go?" Asa agreed, and the two brothers hurried to Milford to gain the support of Judson. To their surprise, he said he would go with them.

At Buffalo, the three brothers, together with E. E. Johnson, their agent, took passage on a lake steamer to Cleveland. From there they moved across the prairie lands of Indiana into Illinois, singing as they went, to line their pockets with jingling coins. Once more the Hutchinsons were enthusiastic and eager for any adventure. After a few days in Chicago, they traveled on the recently completed Chicago and Galena Railroad to Rockford, a thriving manufacturing village on the picturesque Rock River.

After their evening's concert, the trio lounged indolently at the Rockford tavern, swelling their lungs with the wholesome air of Indian summer that carried the memory of warm weather tintured with the odor of burning leaves and first frost. "It's a mighty fine country here." John spoke as if he were quite alone.

"I've lived in nineteen states and three territories and been whipped a thousand times," answered a stranger, "but I'm damned if I ever saw so pretty a country as Minnesota."

"What do you mean?"

"I've just come down the Mississippi from Minnesota. There's the place where farm land is cheap and fertile. I don't doubt but that more people will emigrate to Minnesota than ever go to Kansas. You ought to see it. St. Paul is booming."

"Let's go up there," coaxed Judson.

"No," said John flatly. "We're on our way to Kansas to help make it free."

"Kansas won't miss us, John. It wouldn't take long to go up the river to St. Paul, would it?" Asa turned to the stranger.

"No, indeed. You go from here to Galena, about a day's trip, and catch a boat which will carry you right to St. Paul." He turned to John. "I beg you not to go to Kansas until you have seen the Upper Mississippi River."

"Well," answered John deliberately, "I feel our place is in Kansas, but we'll put it to a vote, the way we sometimes do."

Asa and Judson voted for Minnesota. Although John cast his ballot for Kansas, he was not too displeased over the change in plans. He had worried more than he cared to admit over Fanny's injunction that he buy some good land if any could be found.



The *Lady Franklin* nosed to dock, dropped her hook with clattering anchor chain, and rang down her hissing engines. A mate bawled orders, and roustabouts slid a long gangplank to shore. In the master's cabin the captain logged another trip from Galena to St. Paul. He noted the penetrating November wind and told his pilot that not many more days of navigation on the Mississippi were left before the winter of 1855 blocked the river. Already wild geese filled leaden skies as they pushed southward, their heavy honks a counterpoint to the rumble of the Falls of St. Anthony.

From the steamer's deck, frontier St. Paul looked dingy and forbidding to the Hutchinson brothers, coming at long last to the West that had lured them for years. Once ashore, they

pushed against a wind which whipped their black, tailed coats and yanked at the gates of their high-standing collars. The village, bearing the proud name of a little wilderness church, was a motley collection of frame houses and jerry-built cabins. Here black-robed Jesuits intoned the Mass; dragoons of the Army of the West grounded their muskets; Indians, daubed with black and vermilion, sullenly trod frontier streets; fur trappers, with short pipes in clenched teeth, swung bales of green hides; and thin-lipped river gamblers, with derringers up their handsome broadcloth sleeves, shuffled cards to the musical clink of bottles.

Carrying their valises and supporting a melodeon between them, the brothers and their agent found lodging in a boarding-house, where they met Roswell H. Pendergast, a young man full of eager praise for Minnesota Territory. He promised to help the brothers outfit an expedition and to gather a few other individuals interested in finding land and organizing a town.

Responding to Pendergast's enthusiasm, John spread a map of Minnesota on a rough table and with his finger traced the route they had traveled in their imagination a thousand times on their journey from Galena. His New England tongue stumbled over Indian and French place names—*Traverse des Sioux*, *Mille Lacs*, and *St. Croix Falls*. Asa crowded closer.

"There," said John, pointing, "is Fort Snelling, and over here are the Big Woods."

Asa shifted the lamp to throw more light on the map. "We ought to be able to get supplies at a military post. Then we could go on to Shakopee. If we got there in time we might have a singing."

"Glencoe isn't much more than a day's drive from Shakopee," added Pendergast. "The Big Woods lie close to the Hassan River. That's where we want to look first. My cousin William has seen that country and he recommends it. We need good farm land, but land that's close to timber."

As the brothers talked, they saw the geographic pattern of Minnesota's lakes, woods, and prairies, and they followed

the course of the Minnesota and Red rivers. Pendergast said the territory comprised about 166,000 square miles and that it was nearly four times as large as Ohio. A local paper declared that almost the whole of Minnesota was "fine, rolling prairie of rich soil, a sandy loam, adapted to the short summer of the climate."

The fertility of its soil, its numerous lakes filled with fish, and its wooded areas were attracting thousands of emigrants during the fifties. Men hunting land filled the streets when the Hutchinsons went to order handbills for their concert. The lure of the land, wrote a frontier editor, "reaches the ear of the ague-shaken denizen of Indiana and Illinois, and a strange light illuminates his eye, and a new hope arises in his bosom. Minnesota—there is a cheering sound in the very name." In 1855 the population jumped to forty thousand, and a year later it stood at a hundred thousand.

There was little time to lose if the Hutchinsons were to give a concert and explore the country west of Glencoe before winter set in. Already isinglass ice filled the smaller lakes. Johnson and Pendergast haunted outfitting shops from morning to night. The brothers practiced for a concert, which they scheduled for the evening of November 12 at the First Presbyterian Church on St. Anthony Street. They sang the old favorites, the songs that always had brought them acclaim, but the editor of the *St. Paul Pioneer and Democrat* regretted that Judson had fallen ill with a cold, for, he wrote, "The concert did not pass off so well as was anticipated."



Four days later the Hutchinson party left St. Paul in search of a suitable site upon which to build a town. With the three brothers went their agent and Pendergast; Lewis Harrington, an enterprising young civil engineer; Colonel John H. Stevens, a seasoned Minnesota pioneer; B. E. Messer, an accomplished musician and former singing master; John H. Chubb, a young

bachelor from New York; Henry Chambers, a Canadian; and Lucius N. Parker and John Calef.

Of these twelve men, only one or two had any conception of the difficult task which lay ahead. They were interested in the area that was to become McLeod County and particularly in the region west of the Big Woods, a timbered stretch that extended from Waseca County beyond the border of Todd County. They thought the country near the Hassan River, later known as the South Fork of the Crow River, between Glencoe and the fringe of the woods, would probably suit them.

Travel was slow and difficult. The two wagons, drawn by teams, crept ahead. Nightfall found them weary and wayworn, their horses jaded, and their bodies chilled. John called a halt a few miles east of Little America. When their campfire was burning bright in the prairie darkness, into an iron kettle went a brace of ducks, three partridges, a rabbit, and a squirrel, and soon the brothers, squatting on their heels, were spooning up a savory prairie stew.

The next day they broke ice in Buffalo Creek and reached Glencoe about sundown. After a short concert, they slept at Doty's Hotel, a one-story log shanty, which claimed to be the only hostelry between the Minnesota River on the southwest and the Big Woods on the northeast.

The trail from Glencoe to the Hassan River was so toilsome that even A. J. Bell, the Glencoe surveyor who guided the party, lost his temper. Swales and swamps bogged wagon wheels, and trees lay across the road. They unhitched and unloaded and unpacked and then hitched and loaded and packed again until John swore that Minnesota was a good country for men and dogs, but a hard one on women and horses. Pendergast, Stevens, and Messer only shook their heads and put aching shoulders to mired wheels. Not until first darkness did they finally arrive, on the evening of November 19, at the right fork of the Hassan.

Teamsters staked out the horses and slipped feed bags over their heads. The Canadian stepped to the edge of a grove and

cut sled-length wood. A canvas tent went up, pots and pans were set close to heat, and blankets were unstrapped. Messer, a dreamer, cuddled his violin and got in the way. The Hutchinsons stood at the boundary between campfire light and darkness to peer excitedly at somber scenery. As they watched, the woods, the winding sweep of the river, the range of circling bluffs, and the "smooth, lawn-like" slope from forest to stream disappeared in the deep darkness of night. They turned back to the high fire, picked up battered plates, and helped themselves to food.

Supper over, the men sprawled with feet to glowing coals or, wrapped in blankets, sat on logs. Their talk was of land, the treasure that lay stretched before them in abundance. The valley of the Hassan, they promised one another, would be made to prosper like no other Minnesota region. It was richer than the end of the rainbow. Messer plucked his fiddle strings, tapped his feet suggestively, and led the group in singing. Asa, John, and Judson, heads together, lifted their voices in a verse from the old hymn, *Thus Far the Lord Hath Led Us On*. They had sung it countless times—in rugged New England where the Green Mountains stand, in the bustling cities of the Atlantic seaboard, in the England of Dickens and Martineau—but never more appropriately than now, in the black of night around a blazing campfire on the fringe of the American frontier. "The sparks are carrying the song to the very stars," said the romantic Judson.



After breakfast the next morning, the men scattered to select sites. John, weakened by bilious fever, whittled claim stakes in camp, but Judson and Asa tramped the country, their feet scattering the bleaching bones, heads, and horns of buffaloes. When they returned to camp they had chosen four quarter sections and had christened a small body of water Judson Lake.

The tent afforded protection from the wind, and there the group gathered to discuss the details of filing claims and organ-

izing a company to build a town. Claims around the proposed town site were distributed by lot, the Hutchinsons having first choice. Then came election of officers.

"I nominate Colonel John H. Stevens," said John.

A second was heard, and a murmur of assent came from the men. Stevens was a good choice. He had interested himself in Minnesota since 1849, when, as clerk to Franklin Steele, he helped develop the region that was to become Minneapolis. Practical and hardheaded, he could be counted upon to direct the affairs of the company with business sense. Messer, probably because he once had been a teacher, was chosen secretary. Bell, Harrington, Asa Hutchinson, and Messer comprised a committee to draft a constitution and bylaws. Completely satisfied, the party broke camp to return to Glencoe.

The constitution, presented to the company for approval at Glencoe, contained the usual provisions pertaining to organization and administration. The practical wisdom of Stevens was clearly evident in the sections dealing with shares, assessments, and rights of stockholders, but the document also reflected the idealism and reform tendencies of the Hutchinsons. It provided, for example, that no intoxicating liquors might be sold in the town, and that no bowling alleys or gambling devices would be tolerated. Long devoted to woman suffrage, the brothers insisted that women must enjoy equal rights with men. They set aside five acres for Humanity's Church, and fifteen acres for a public park. Eight lots were reserved for educational purposes.

Although Stevens and the Hutchinsons first planned to develop two towns, one to be called Harmony and the other to be named Hutchinson, the directors soon wisely decided to concentrate on the latter. All their energetic effort was devoted to transforming the wilderness of the north half of section 6, township 116, range 29 into a flourishing village. Harrington, who had come from Ohio, was employed to survey the site, and he and Bell contracted to build a frame house. Gathering tools and instruments, they returned to Hutchinson over snow-

blown trails in December. Their work, however, was not completed until the following April.

Meanwhile, the singing brothers, scarcely able to contain their enthusiasm, planned to go on concert tour to raise funds for the purchase of equipment and supplies. Already they were learning the realistic lesson that founding a town was more a grim business than a pleasant adventure. Judson patted his melodeon. "This will bring money for plows and seeds and tools," he promised.

After a farewell concert in St. Paul on November 28, they boarded a river boat to begin the journey home. Much as they loved New England, they regretted having to spend a winter in the East when so much was to be done in the West. They cared little that the St. Paul *Pioneer and Democrat* sneeringly spoke of them as "sharp and keen New Englanders, with a great love of notoriety and a strong partiality for the almighty dollar," but they grumbled loudly at the beef stews, larded biscuits, rancid butter, and muddy coffee which was served them by noisy colored waiters on shipboard. Such fare could not compare with Minnesota duck and partridge, and coffee boiled over an open fire.

At Lynn, in Boston, everywhere they gave concerts that winter, the Hutchinsons talked of Minnesota. They spun tales of the *voyageurs*, of the Red River carts and the *bois brûlés* from Pembina, of the Jesuit fathers, Charles Raymbault and Isaac Jogues, who were among the first white men to see Lake Superior. They had picked up a lot of the north country's history, some of it quite garbled, and they read whatever they could put their hands to. Always they planned for the spring, when they could return to the prairies of Minnesota, a land, John said, that was "fairer than day."

In April of '56 they inserted a notice in the Boston *Daily Journal*: "Address the Hutchinson Family, after the first of May, at Minneapolis, Minnesota Territory." Crowds jammed Tremont Temple to listen to their farewell concert, for a Boston editor made it plain that the singing family had established a

new town in the West and "intend to settle there." John himself said he was leaving the old homestead forever, to spend the remainder of his life in the valley of the Hassan.



As usual, the brothers sang their way westward. Music lovers heard them in Ohio, Illinois, and Michigan. These concerts netted them generous profits, so that when they disembarked from the *Golden Era* at Minneapolis on May 3, their purses bulged. With these earnings they bargained cannily in outfitting shops for plows, spades, saws, axes, and hoes. Seeds were selected with care. Asa wanted hardy corn, pumpkins which would make deep yellow pies, and garden vegetables that would keep throughout a winter. Boxes of groceries—salt pork, beans, flour, and coffee—piled up, and after long hours of debate they added three pairs of oxen, a few cows, and a hog or two to their possessions. Finally their emigrant wagons, sturdy frames affixed to heavy-duty axles, were packed. The livestock followed behind on ropes fastened to the endgates.

They noticed little change since they last drove the trace from St. Paul to Hutchinson, except that now they were following spring rather than pushing winter. The prairie was lush with fresh grass, and lakes shimmered in the sun. Only mudholes, souvenirs of spring thaws, marred their journey. When they arrived, Harrington met them with outstretched arms.

"The survey is done," he called, "and the streets, blocks, and park are plotted. Messer has built a tavern, and you're to move right in."

The Hutchinsons stepped into a room which ran the length of the lower floor and became, in turn, sitting room, bedroom, and parlor. To one side was a small sleeping room used by Messer's family. An ell served as the kitchen. An open stairway led to a general dormitory, partitioned by flimsy curtains, where as many as thirty men and women slept at night. The build-

ing was so loosely constructed that both heat and cold drifted through at will.

Each day new families arrived. The Cheslers drove up, and the Pendergasts and the Putnams, until it seemed as if the inn could hold no more.

"Listen to this," exclaimed Asa, brandishing a copy of the *Henderson Democrat*. "It says that two hundred people are on their way to Glencoe, Hutchinson, and vicinity, and that more families are expected soon from New York and Pennsylvania."

"When I was in Henderson two weeks ago," said a new arrival, "I talked with thirty men who were provisioning to come up here. Some of 'em must be in Glencoe right now."

Such news stirred the Hutchinsons to activity. They put their cattle to graze on fresh grass, and harnessed their oxen to pull the plows through the root-matted prairie sod. At times Judson had to hack with the hand ax before even the sharp plow blade would cut through to rich undersoil. It was grim business, this turning the undisturbed prairie into disciplined fields. Before July, however, bright green corn, in even rows, was giving promise of harvest, and gardens were abundant with vegetables grown from the seeds purchased in St. Paul.

John and his bulldog, Blucher, flushed ducks from the swales. The woods and groves were alive with wild pigeons. Roast goose appeared so frequently on Messer's table that it was thought commonplace. Prices were not too high. Wild duck eggs brought thirty cents a dozen; Irish potatoes cost a dollar and a half a bushel; and flour, a scarce item, was priced at thirteen dollars a barrel. Fifteen pounds of buckwheat could be had for ninety cents, and syrup, to smother the buckwheat cakes, cost a dollar a gallon. Butter first was priced at sixty cents a pound, but when John King brought in the first pound of homemade butter, the price dropped, and villagers felt that civilization really had come.

The Hutchinsons, busy raising cabins and covering roofs with butternut shingles, felt only one serious lack. The town

was urgently in need of a sawmill. Since neither the company nor the brothers had sufficient funds to purchase one, John proposed that the Hutchinsons go on a concert tour to raise cash.

"We better go farther than Minneapolis and St. Paul," cautioned Asa. "The Campbell Troupe played there in May and so did the Blakely Family."

"Dan Bryant and his minstrels were there about the same time," said John. "How about going down to Chicago again?"

"I think we ought to give a performance in St. Paul first," was Judson's opinion.

The "sawmill tour" was successful, and milling machinery, costing about thirty-six hundred dollars, was shipped to Galena, put on a barge for Carver, and then hauled by team to Hutchinson. Every mechanic in the village turned out to help assemble the parts. With the mill in operation, the number of frame structures increased rapidly. By winter, when snow lay three feet thick, six new homes had been completed, and in one of these Harrington managed the town's first post office.

The brothers, however, again ran short of cash and journeyed to New England to spend the winter season on tour. Early in May 1857, they returned to Minnesota, and John, practical as always, turned immediately to plowing. He also shingled and boarded a new cabin on his claim, made plans for building a schoolhouse, preached and sang on Sundays, and took his turn in the sawmill, where the monotony, he said, sometimes was varied by the appearance of a bear. Then all hands dropped work and chased Bruin, usually with no success.



From time to time the brothers left Hutchinson for brief periods to sing. On one of these tours they sold a share in the company to Ole Bull, the distinguished Norwegian violinist. But the number of shares sold in this way never realized enough funds to meet expenses, and, as the years passed, the

financial problems increased until the Hutchinson enterprise became almost hopelessly involved. Then difficulty arose between the Hutchinsons and their agent, Johnson. He was replaced by George William Putnam, a picturesque character who had accompanied Charles Dickens as manager when the English novelist toured the United States in 1842. Dickens referred to Putnam as "Mr. Q." or, in *American Notes*, as "my Boston friend."

Perhaps the Hutchinsons became acquainted with Putnam at one of their early concerts in Boston, for he was both singer and painter, and the author of a favorite comic ditty, the *Wax-Work Song*. Dickens, however, thought little of the pot-bellied sketches he made of canalboat passengers and less of his "grunting" bass notes. He habitually wore a cloak, like Hamlet's, and a very tall, limp, dusty, black hat, which he exchanged on long journeys for a cap like Harlequin's.

One of Putnam's duties for the Hutchinsons was to stimulate settlement by describing the advantages of Minnesota life, for, despite the great rush of people to the West, Hutchinson's population was not increasing rapidly. Putnam did the best he could in letters to the New York *Tribune*, but his efforts could not have been pleasing to his employers. They naturally wanted glowing descriptions of Minnesota as a land of golden opportunity, but their sentimental secretary turned out to be a hardheaded realist intent upon picturing pioneer life as it was rather than as it should be.

"I have spent the past nine months in Minnesota," wrote Putnam, "and to those who contemplate a removal to the West, I would say, Do not dwell upon the poetry of Western life; don't talk of 'broad, green prairies, waving with luxuriant verdure, and covered with flowers,' of the 'glorious rivers,' and of 'forests abounding with game.'" The prairies, he continued, are monotonous and unpicturesque; the grass green but rank; the flowers mean and few; and although plenty of prairie chickens, ducks, geese, and deer are in the woods, they "don't come and ask you to shoot them."

Hutchinson itself Putnam described as a community of "intellectual and progressive" people who had built a good log tavern, a store, a school, a blacksmith's shop and steam sawmill, and several frame houses. He believed the town to be located in a healthful site where no man, if he exercised common prudence, would take the fever and ague. Then came the ringing invitation: "So let the homeless and the poor come, in the spirit of a progressive age, saying:

'We'll cross the prairies as of old
The Pilgrims crossed the sea,
And make the West, as they the East,
The homestead of the Free!'

In spite of these efforts, the town grew slowly, and at times the Hutchinsons were discouraged. They tried to spend as much of their leisure as possible in Minnesota, but their financial burdens forced them frequently to swing the circle on concert tour. Then too, the slavery controversy was coming to white heat, and the brothers emphasized as never before their abolitionist sympathies. But even Minnesota audiences were apt to boo and hiss at the antislavery songs on their programs. In St. Paul the editor of the *Pioneer and Democrat* sharply rebuked the citizens for their catcalling at a concert.

The general stage conduct of the Hutchinsons, of course, frequently excited mirth and sometimes led to ridicule even when the family was not lifting its voice on controversial issues. Asa generally announced titles with a deliberate pause between words. Standing behind the melodeon, he would inform an audience: "We . . will . . now . . sing . . the . . beautiful . . song . . composed . . by . . Lucy . . Larcom . . entitled . . *Hannah . . Is . . At . . the . . Window . . Binding . . Shoes.*"

During the summer of 1858 the troupe was giving a performance at Melodeon Hall in St. Paul. Somehow or other Judson was stuck on Pig Eye bar and failed to reach the hall until after the concert had begun. Rushing frantically down the aisle, carpetbag in hand, he leaped upon the stage and, in full view of

the audience, kissed both his brothers. The audience was under the impression they had been separated for years instead of only twenty-four hours.

A member of Dan Emmett's minstrel company witnessed these exaggerated greetings, and the next evening, when Emmett's troupe was playing in the hall, one of the end men was missing from his place. In about fifteen minutes he came tearing in, comic carpetbag in hand, to mimic in exact detail Judson's antics of the previous night. The Hutchinsons, wrote a witness of both performances, became the talk of the town. Quite unperturbed, the brothers returned to their village on the Hassan.

Neither were they unduly irritated when a sour St. Cloud resident wrote to the *Boston Post*: "The Hutchinsons have been around here, but then you see they are yankees, and did not make much of an impression. Besides that, they have a town laid out in a neighboring county, and that is *so common*. The fact is we can only be delighted with a genuine Italian *prima dona*."

Perhaps the brothers were facing so many real problems in their slowly growing town that they had no energies to waste on buffoons or on anonymous newspaper correspondents.

They suffered a real disappointment in the spring of 1858, when a steamboat built to navigate the Hassan, Crow, and Mississippi rivers completed only one trip and then was sold to make the more profitable run between Minneapolis and St. Cloud. The Hutchinsons were convinced that the Hassan was high enough between its banks to have floated the steamer from Hutchinson to Minneapolis. The hopes of many settlers had been pinned upon the river trade, and those who during the hard winter just past had lived for weeks on potatoes and slippery elm bark, vowed they would pack up and leave if goods could arrive no quicker than by pack train. The Hassan, they swore, ought to be good for something more than buffalo fish, which they were sick and tired of eating. Boiled, baked, stewed, or fried, the flavoring was always the same: pure Hassan river water.

John, always more earth-minded than his flighty brothers, never reconciled himself to the belief that the Minnesota Indians were harmless. With three Sioux squatting by the fire, Putnam, writing to the *Tribune*, said: "As far as the Indians are concerned, it is safer traveling in any part of the Territory than to walk some of the thoroughfares of Boston and New York in the evening." Probably this was true, but John was uneasy. He knew that settlers were pushing the tribes relentlessly from hunting grounds they had claimed for generations. But when he timidly mentioned dangerous Indians, he was laughed into silence.

Then in the spring of 1862 in Washington he heard of great unrest among the tribes of Nebraska, Dakota, Colorado, and Utah. The talk was that both English and Confederate agents were stirring up the redmen, who were already irritated by the payment of their annuities in paper money rather than in gold. As soon as possible he journeyed to Hutchinson, arriving there during the first week in August. He found the settlers untroubled and called a meeting, which about three hundred persons, mostly women, attended. "The people," he said, "were thus put upon the alert, although no definite action was taken at the time."

On August 18 the long-smoldering passions of Little Crow, a Sioux chief, burst into lurid flame when a war party of Dakota braves attacked a village of traders on the Minnesota River about six miles below the mouth of the Redwood. Other bands struck throughout southwestern Minnesota. John's worst fears were realized.

Each day the Hutchinson settlers scouted the country and scrutinized trails. Women and children stayed close to barricaded cabins and spoke in whispers. Homesteaders abandoned their claims and moved to Hutchinson. By the twenty-third it was common opinion that McLeod County would be invaded and that Hutchinson itself was in danger. A mass meeting was called to discuss the situation.

The settlers, now thoroughly frightened, began work on a

typical wilderness stockade of the type which had protected emigrants to the bloody ground of Kentucky, to the deep forests of the Ohio country, and to the edge of the Mississippi. Heavy timbers, extending about eight feet above ground, were set solidly in a deep trench in the center of the town. These, together with three log houses, formed the fort's walls. Port-holes were cut every four feet and a bastion was built at each of the four corners. When completed, the stockade was about a hundred feet square. Then armed squads lugged in farm produce, stacking vegetables, sacks of flour, salt pork, and other foodstuffs in protected corners. About four hundred persons sought refuge within the walls.

Waiting was hard after the defense plans were completed. Day after day riflemen strained their eyes for signs of Indians. The wheat stood in the fields, ripe for harvesting, and men hated to idle when they might be busy with scythes. They knew that somewhere Colonel Henry H. Sibley was in the field with four companies of the Sixth Minnesota Infantry, and they hoped that Governor Alexander Ramsey would dispatch additional troops, but their actual information was meager. They felt isolated and alone.

Early September seemed to promise better times to come. The morning of the fourth opened bright and beautiful with no smoke from burning cabins lazing over the horizon. Stockade discipline relaxed, and a few Germans harnessed a wagon and creaked through the fort's heavy gates to work the fields. They drove straight into an Indian ambush.

Before the astonished defenders could rally themselves, the hill west of the village was covered with braves. William H. Ensign barely had time to gallop away to summon reinforcements before yelling warriors encircled the town. Their dark forms glided from tree to tree, infiltrated thickets, and squirmed through prairie grass. They touched torch to houses and the school. By noon a circle of fire surrounded the stockade. Dense, stifling smoke hung heavy in the sky.

Throughout the skirmishes of the early afternoon the fort

stood alerted for a frontal attack. But about four o'clock, lookouts observed the Indians withdrawing, and soon the Sioux, laden with plunder, had disappeared. Little Crow had retreated when his outposts reported a column of infantry and cavalry approaching. Ensign was returning with troops from Lake Addie.

The town's defenders picked through gutted cabins and burned barns. Wheat was destroyed in the fields, personal possessions were hacked and broken, wagons and harness were stolen. Carcasses of a hundred cows and horses littered barnyards and streets. The settlers were, however, spared the grim task of burying dead, for not a single person had been killed defending the fort. But fear, as heavy as swamp miasma, settled over the community.

Many residents salvaged what they could and moved away. A land of promise had turned into a battleground, and the men of Hutchinson wanted none of it. By day and by night the wagons moved out. Blackened ruins stood monument to an iridescent dream. "It seems to me the property is practically worthless," mourned John. Even the knowledge that regular troops had captured five hundred Indians and, by direct order of Lincoln, were to hang thirty-eight of them failed to stem the exodus. Little Crow was not among those executed at Mankato the day after Christmas.

Only a handful of stalwarts stayed on in Hutchinson, but, in the belief that Little Crow was sulking in Canada, a few new families moved in. Once again the cheerful sound of the biting ax filled the air, and clean smoke from new cabins drifted across the Hassan. By the spring of 1863 most of the Indian scars had been removed. Peace, it seemed, had come to stay.

Nathan Lamson, a farmer from Massachusetts, and his son Chauncey left home on the evening of July 3 to tend their grazing cattle and perhaps replenish their larder with a deer. About five miles from town they hit a trail leading through a raspberry patch. Lamson's hunter's eye discerned movement.

Two Indians, an older man and a boy about sixteen, were cramming handfuls of juicy berries into their mouths. Creeping quietly to a poplar tree, Lamson rested his gun against the trunk and wounded Little Crow in the side. The Indian, firing about the same time, sent a ball through the flesh of Lamson's shoulder.

When his father fell to the ground to reload, Chauncey followed the retreating Little Crow into the dense thickets. Suddenly they came face to face and both fired. Little Crow dropped with a bullet through his chest, and the lad felt the chief's ball whistle past his cheek. Thinking his father dead and fearing that other Indians lurked near by, Chauncey ran to Hutchinson.

Beside himself with fatigue and grief, the boy blurted out his story to fear-ridden neighbors. A search party reached Little Crow's body early the next morning. No trace was found of Lamson, or of Little Crow's son, Wowinapa. When the party returned to town, they toted a dead Indian and were carrying Lamson's white shirt and rifle. Almost the first person they met was Lamson himself, who had hurried away during the night and reached home about two in the morning.

All Hutchinson turned out to celebrate the death of Little Crow and to gloat over his remains. Small boys, busily greeting the Fourth of July with black powder, caps, and homemade firecrackers, seized the corpse with wild enthusiasm. They exploded giant crackers in its nostrils and dribbled trains of powder from the ears. Then the chief's head was severed from his body and carried through town jammed on the end of a fence rail. Finally both body and head lay buried in a shallow gravel grave. Within a few days the corpse was dug up, some say by the rude saber of a cavalryman and others by a local physician, and was boxed and sunk into the-Hassan, so that the flesh might disintegrate. Long afterward the scalp came to rest in the custody of the Minnesota Historical Society.

The Tribe of Asa

THE Hutchinsons' preoccupation with the affairs of their Minnesota town had begun to lessen, even before the Sioux took to the warpath. Soon their interest in singing and reform took first place again, but all their lives they maintained connections of varying degrees with the town that bore their name. Asa was captivated by the Hassan Valley's charm and planned to reside a part of each year in Hutchinson. There, in a roomy frame house, he lived with Lizzie his wife, his daughter Abby, and little Fred. And there Oliver Dennett, Asa's youngest son, born in Lynn in 1856, spent his boyhood vacations and much of his later life.

John became a legal resident of Hutchinson in 1862, but concert tours and other activities kept him elsewhere except for brief visits at long intervals. His real affections lay in the East, at Old High Rock. Judson, too, preferred New England. With Asa in Minnesota and his brothers far across the country, it was impossible any longer for the three to sing together. Perhaps the trio might have clung closer had it not been for differences that arose over who should take Sister Abby's place in the troupe.

Both Asa's wife and John's Fanny nursed aspirations. Each possessed a good, but not unusual, voice. Only Judson's wife, Jerusha, had no ambitions for a stage career, but her daughter Kate was talented and wished to go on the road. Judson himself thought the brothers should not split up to go their separate ways. The tension rapidly reached the breaking point.

To merge the conflicting and jealous interests of the three groups finally proved impossible. Asa set himself against

Fanny's appearing with a reorganized troupe and then realized that he could not graciously push the claims of his own wife. Judson realized that this impasse wrecked his daughter's opportunities. Finally Asa, "sick at the confusion of our business," offered a solution.

"I think it best," he said roughly to hide deep grief, "that each of us goes his separate way."

John had feared this was coming. "That'll mean the end of the Hutchinson Family."

"I expect so, but the old Aeolians died when Abby married and Jesse went to cursed California. We're getting old, and each of us better look out for himself."

"We're not as old as all that." Judson, like many neurotics, had a terror of old age. "Why, Asa, you're only thirty-five and John's just two years older. Look at me, I'm forty-one."

Asa fiddled with his watch chain. "Sure, but we're older than that when it comes to singing. On and off we've been on the road for sixteen years."

Sixteen years, thought John. Sixteen years of scrimping and saving and of an endless procession of theaters in countless cities that badgered them for their stand on slavery or else praised them for the same cause. He sighed. Perhaps it would be best to quit now when Americans the nation over remembered them as "a nest of brothers with a sister in it."

"I guess you're right at that, Asa. We'll try not to follow one another on the concert circuit."

Judson cried all the way home to Milford.

Before long three troupes of Hutchinsons, to the utter bafflement of audiences and editors, were giving concerts. They sang the same songs, upheld the antislavery cause, agitated for temperance, and spoke out in defense of woman suffrage.

The Tribe of Asa consisted of Asa, his wife, and two children. As soon as little Denny was old enough, he was added to the company. John toured with Fanny, Henry, and Viola. Judson, determined to do as the others did, set out with his

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wife and daughter and William V. Wallace, a pianist and tuner of musical instruments. Their printed programs, composed by Judson, reflected the author's disturbed mind, although patrons considered them only humorous.

"Tickets obtained where they're left to be sold," read one of these programs. "And those who've no paper, or silver, or gold, can leave with the Door-keeper as they pass in, the amount in Jewelry, Jewsharps, or Gin-ger; Children's Shoes, Jack-knives, Dry Goods or Honey; or any thing else, except 'Bogus' Money. Children who are pledged not to cry or to laugh, can come with their Parents for Seven Cents and a Half. The Blind and Cripples pass Free at the Door! And the Rich must buy Tickets and give to the Poor."

The strain of managing both the financial and the musical details of a troupe proved too much. More and more Judson communed with the spirits, haunted the chambers of mesmerists, and sought escape in trances. He exhorted audiences to mend their evil ways, he damned the rich, and he cried over the miseries of the poor. His failing memory tangled him in a web of money difficulties. He grieved that he could not be with his brothers, and he began holding conversations with Jesse's spirit. "Judson getting among disrespecktable persons in his worship," Asa wrote in his diary. "His wife leading him down to hell."

Early in 1859 Judson and John both were at High Rock, where John was supervising the construction of a new home. It was to be a dream cottage, a place of perfection where Fanny might have comfort and happiness, and John named it Daisy Cottage. Judson was more distraught than usual. His body was rigid, so that John rubbed him and spoke as if to a terrified child. Outside, a cold east wind plummeted the mercury to below zero.

When John got up from an afternoon nap, Judson had disappeared. He was found in the cellar of Daisy Cottage. John cut the rope from around his neck and massaged the cold legs and arms. Then he and a hired man carried the dead body up

a rickety ladder, across the frozen yard, and laid it gently in Stone Cottage.

"I knew it the minute I woke up," moaned John, "but he talked so much of suicide, I didn't pay attention. I should have known when he wrote me this note a few days ago: 'I have had a strange fate, and probably it will grow stranger and stranger until death. But it is all owing to my strange make, and can't very well be helped. I have never been so miserable in my life, as I have since I broke up in the fall, trying to get all together. Sing on, dear brother, and hope on, and enjoy all you can, which is right.'"

John's son Henry held up a small wooden box that he had made boy-fashion from odds and ends. "Here's what Uncle Jud wrote on the lid before he went out."

Lifting the box to the light, John made out the scrawled penciling:

This is Henry's box,
It caused him many knocks;
I would say the box cover,
The box to cover over,
He made it with his tools;
He is not one of the fools,
That goes without any rules,
Like me, one of the mules!

The death of Judson, on January 11, once again swept the singing family into the nation's headlines. Papers from New England to the Mississippi spoke of his musical talents, and many mentioned his insanity. The *New York Post*, never fond of the family, took the occasion to ridicule the original troupe. "Their concerts," it said, "were as much the rage as the opera is now. Good music was not so frequently heard in New York then as at the present day, and the simple quartettes and songs of the Hutchinsons, with the accompaniment of an asthmatic seraphine, were enthusiastically admired. They became followers of the various *isms*, and interlarded their concerts with abolition songs and phrenological speeches."

No editor called Judson great, but one wrote that he was better than great, he was good—his character “was of the heart hearty; and all who have such a viscus, enjoyed his singing hugely.”



After Judson's death, his brother Joshua organized a fourth company, consisting of himself, Judson's daughter Kate, and Walter Kittredge, a New Hampshire ballad singer who later composed *Tenting on the Old Camp Ground*, one of the Civil War's most popular songs. Joshua's group, however, never achieved the successes of John and Asa's troupes.

For a quarter of a century the courageous Asa crisscrossed the nation with his family, a Prince melodeon, and a supply of posters printed on paper of every color. He distributed hundreds of leaflets advertising the town of Hutchinson. Even his concert programs included a boost for the town: “To those who desire a Homestead on the free prairies of the great North West, the Family would take pleasure in recommending the fertile soil and healthy climate of Minnesota, consecrated, as it is, to free schools, free churches, and a free and intelligent people; already populated by 200,000 sons and daughters from the hills and vales of the Connecticut, Merrimac, Kennebec and Penobscot: yet ‘millions of acres want hands’ in this New England of the West. Yes, Uncle Sam is rich enough to give us all (at \$1.25 per acre) a farm. In the autumn of '55 the Family located their ‘farm-homes’ in the valley of the Hassan River, 50 miles due west from St. Paul, and the Mississippi.

A hearty welcome we will give
To all the sons of toil,
So come and have a home
On that glorious free-soil.”

Selling land, training his children to sing, and rehearsing new numbers proved dreary and frequently profitless. Again and again Asa entered “Poor concert, poor pay” in his small pocket diary. Yet he persisted until he was ready to drop with exhaus-

tion. He frequently visited Sister Abby at Orange, New Jersey, and from her received new inspiration. She suggested that he include *Squire Jones's Daughter* in his repertoire, and Asa soon achieved unusual success with this comic number.

Sweet is the gush of waterfalls,
The murmur of the breeze,
The ripple of the rivulet,
The sighing of the trees;

And sweet the sound of lute and voice,
When borne across the water;
But sweeter still the charming voice
Of Squire Jones's daughter.

Hot is the lava tide that pours
A down Vesuvius' mountain,
And hot the stream that bubbles out
From Iceland's gushing fountain.

And hot a boy's ears boxed for doin'
That which he hadn't oughter,
But hotter still the love I feel
For Squire Jones's daughter.

Comic relief, Asa acknowledged, was proper, but he continued to build his programs around the great reform problems that the Hutchinsons had supported for more than two decades. He maintained his friendship with Garrison's radical school and began to watch with interest the political career of the Republican party and of Abraham Lincoln from Illinois. Each day he snatched a few minutes to read antislavery literature. For days he carried Loring Moody's *History of the Mexican War* in his wide coat pocket, burying his nose in the small print on railroad cars and in evil-smelling, small-town depots.

Asa insisted upon admitting both white and colored folks to his concerts, and in 1859 he joined forces with the Luca Brothers, a troupe of three Negroes who sang and played more classical numbers than did the Hutchinsons. It was an unfortunate merger. The press not only criticized Asa for making

a three weeks' tour with Negroes, but it also compared the talents of the Tribe of Asa unfavorably with those of the colored troupe. In Fremont, Ohio, an editor spoke of the "interminable screech of Asa's cracked voice, that issued from an equally *cracked cranium*" and went on to say that the redeeming feature of the concert was the playing and singing of the Lucas, whose selections were "all of high order and good taste."

News that Asa's troupe had joined a company of "Negro minstrels" worried Abby and brought a sharp rebuke from John. "It is hard enough," he wrote, "to distinguish the Hutchinson families on the road without having to ward off attacks, like I did last night, because somebody confused my tribe with yours and the colored Luca singers."

Asa shrugged away John's angry criticism as jealousy and took the combined troupes to Cleveland. Probably no community had ever been so consistently cordial toward the Hutchinsons as Ohio's great industrial city on Lake Erie. Hundreds remembered when the original troupe gave its first concert there and had turned out loyally whenever the brothers played return engagements. Near-by Oberlin College always welcomed them.

But when Asa took the Lucas to the Forest City early in March 1859, resentment flared. Ossian E. Dodge, the outspoken editor of *Dodge's Literary Museum*, accused the Tribe of Asa of three falsehoods designed to hoodwink old friends.

He denounced Asa for billing his troupe as the Hutchinson Family when only one original Hutchinson was present. He charged him with misrepresentation in describing his group as having an established reputation when "they have just commenced traveling." He objected to Asa's program claim that the compositions sung were composed by Hutchinsons. "The old party of Hutchinsons," Dodge went on, "instead of ever composing anything as they lead the public to believe—*borrowed* most of their melodies and lived on the brains of other people."

Dodge also pointed out that Mrs. Hutchinson possessed a light, sweet voice of limited compass and that little Freddy,

although a bright lad, needed proper training to become even a good singer. "Asa Hutchinson," continued Dodge, "was formerly a superior bass singer, but with the family peculiarity of *straining after impossibilities*, he has ceased his bass entirely, and now attempts song singing and witticisms. His song singing is only average . . . while his attempts at imitation of poor Jud, now deceased, are ridiculously disgusting, and the audience are led to pity the performer and his associates."

Asa read the blast with a long face. Dodge was influential throughout the Western Reserve and had his finger in a good many pies. He ran a music house on Euclid Avenue, composed music that Ditson published, gave concerts, and had a voice in Cleveland's financial affairs. He also dabbled in steamboat construction.

"That tears it, I reckon," said Asa. "I've been hankerin' to go back to Minnesota anyway, an' I guess now's the time."

Lizzie squared her shoulders. She was a plain-faced woman, her heavy hair parted in the middle and drawn over the ears. Her Quaker background had given her decided opinions, and in emergencies she drew upon a deep well of stubbornness.

"That's what John would like you to do."

"I suppose it is," Asa admitted, "but what else is there to do? There's just enough truth in what Dodge says to sour us everywhere."

"Nonsense. Forget Dodge. Maybe he's right and maybe he's just jealous."

"All right, but we better go East again until this blows over."

"That's sensible enough," said Lizzie, and she began to pack.



Asa concluded his agreement with the Luca Brothers and took his troupe into New England, narrowly missing John's company, which was only two days ahead on the same circuit. Throughout Maine the Tribe of Asa played to full houses, made handsome profits, and received gracious press notices.

"I'm goin' to send Dodge this notice." Asa waved a paper at his wife. "Listen: 'The Hutchinsons gave a genteel and sensible concert last evening. We saw nothing that the most fastidious could condemn—no ear-tickling appeals to the baser passions in clap-trap comical vulgarities, got up for effect. Asa B. gave some very pertinent Recitations on the prevailing fashions of the day. Master Freddy is a lad that bids fair to make his way in the musical world. Lizzie has an open, frank, honest, good, motherly appearance;—a splendid voice, full and melodious.'"

Nonetheless, criticism of the tribe's abolitionism increased steadily. By 1860 the hisses were all but ruining one concert after another. Determined not to give an inch, Asa unwisely added new antislavery songs to programs already overheavy with radical doctrine. Possibly no song incensed moderates more than *Have You Heard the Loud Alarm?* Asa usually sang it to the tune of *The Old Granite State*.

From the green hills of New England,
 From the Western slopes and prairies,
 From the mines of Pennsylvania,
 Have you heard the loud alarm?
 For the war note has been sounded,
 And the Locos stand astounded,
 While their rule, in ruin founded,
 Sinks before the people's arm.

Steeped in infamous corruption,
 Sold to sugar-cane and cotton,
 Lo! a nation's heart is rotten,
 And the vampires suck her blood;
 O'er our broad and free dominions
 Rules the Cotton King whose minions
 Clip our fearless eagle's pinions,
 And invite Oppression's reign.

Patronage fell so sharply that Asa resorted to trickery to fill an auditorium. He gave complimentary tickets to school-

teachers, asking them to "plug" the concert in classes; he distributed tickets to benevolent institutions and orphan asylums, and he pinned programs to coats, jackets, and trousers of clothing store dummies. The Bangor *Times* gleefully reported that even such tactics could not inveigle citizens to hear an inferior concert.

The strain of caring for two small children on tour and the constant worry over slavery frazzled Lizzie's nerves, so that she noted in her leather-covered journal that she made "a great many" mistakes during concerts. She indicated too that rowdy audiences troubled her. Sometimes the troupe took in only enough cash to carry it to the next town. Now and again she spoke pathetically of an enthusiastic crowd that encored her singing of *Hannah's At the Window Binding Shoes*.

Usually Asa took his troupe on tour during the early spring and late autumn, spending the hot summers at Lynn and sometimes going to Minnesota for a month or two in the winter. At Old High Rock Lizzie labored to catch up with the domestic duties she could not perform while on circuit. She cut and sewed a white hooped skirt for herself, paid ten dollars each for a shawl and bonnet, and purchased material to make Freddy a pair of trousers. Again and again the only entry in her diary was: "Hard work all day."

Before concert proceeds fell off, she was apt to purchase expensive gifts for Christmas presents. She herself was fond of jewelry, spending in good times forty-five dollars for a gold watch, five dollars for a cameo pin, another five for a gold thimble, thirteen dollars for a gold bracelet, and four dollars for a gold pencil. A silk dress to wear on the stage came to forty-five dollars. In the lean years, however, she watched expenses carefully, remodeling old garments and buying a cheap grade of silk for her traveling costume.

When she went to Boston, she usually returned with a book or two under her arm. Hinton R. Helper's *The Impending Crisis* was one of these. All the Hutchinsons, including John, who was home at the time, read it with enthusiasm. Helper was

a North Carolinian who believed that slavery wrapped poverty around the South like a winding sheet.

"I'm tarnal glad the Republican party approves this book," said Asa. "It's just what's needed to stir people up. I ought to mention it at concerts."

"Let well enough be," cautioned Lizzie. "We have trouble enough as it is. Let the Republicans fight their own battles."

"Do you want me to sit here like a bump on a log?" Asa snorted. "It's time we went on tour again. Look at this!" He shoved Greeley's *Political Text-Book for 1860* at her. "Lincoln and the Republicans aren't fixin' to attack slavery at all. They're just against its extension into new territory."

Lizzie remained silent, refusing to feed his belligerence.

"That means we've got to go out and sing for abolition everywhere." Asa was shouting now. "Garrison was right when he said there're too many middle-of-the-roaders in the North."

The socks she was mending dropped to the floor as Lizzie stood up. She looked like her sea-captain father, her feet braced as if against the heave of a sailing schooner and her head flung back as if defying a southwester. Then she sagged, all at once. What's the use, she thought; they're all the same, every one of the Hutchinsons. There's no halfway in them.

"When do you want to leave?" she asked.

"The sooner, the better."



The tour was hectic and dramatic; Lizzie never forgot the nightmare of traveling and singing, singing and traveling. She moved from one railroad station to another and in and out of endless drab hotel rooms, and she was always tired. In Rutland, Buffalo, Toledo, and Chicago—it made little difference where—the monotonous schedule went on day after day.

Asa grew bolder with every concert. He stayed out arguing the slave question until long after Lizzie had tucked the children into bed. She sat in her hotel room alone, darning and

patching, writing letters, and forcing exhausted fingers to make brief journal entries: "Made some 2 or 3\$ more than expenses; sick—mosquitoes dreadful; Asa *must* sing anti-slavery."

The more opposition Asa met, the greater became his devotion to abolitionism. Men thronged about him after performances, demanding and explaining, or damning and proving. He was always the center of a hubbub. Frequently arguments begun peacefully enough ended in violent quarreling.

One night Asa recited a favorite humorous verse, "Lament of the Disconsolate Loafer," a parody on the Hutchinsons' *There's A Good Time Coming*.

They say "a good time's coming,"
Though it travels mighty slow,
But if ever it should get here,
I hope they'll let us know.
I can't get a drop of gin,
And am short of bread and tater,
And find that I am getting in
Almost a state of nater.

They say this country, free,
No tyranny can block up,
But when I has a spree,
They puts me in the lock-up.
If thus they treat a freeman
Of this boasted Yankee nation,
I'd rather be a nigger slave,
And work on a plantation.

"I got a helluva lot better poem than that 'un." An Illinois farmer, in worn shirt, rough work pants, and muddy boots, elbowed through to tug at Asa's arm. "Want to hear it? Maybe you kin sing it at your next concert."

The crowd circled closer to see the fun. It loved to badger "high-toned" performers. Asa sensed that something was wrong, but he didn't know just what.

"Let's hear your poem," somebody shouted.

The farmer started in a voice loud enough to fill the parlor and carry into the bar.

What has caused all our discontent,
Our Union asunder rent,
And is on our destruction bent?
Abolition.

What has with discord filled the land,
Brought trade and discord to a stand,
And rules us with an iron hand?
Abolition.

"Stop it!" yelled Asa.

"You don't like it, hey? Well, here's one you'll like no better."

"Loyal" Abolitionists
A "brother darkey" meet,
They doff their hats to Sambo
And kiss him on the street.
With arms around his sable neck,
They take a promenade;
Then love and friendship pledge
In a glass of lemonade!

"Barkeep, a glass of lemonade for Sambo's friend!" The crowd milled around Asa, plucking and nipping at him. He circled until he became dizzy and the hanging lamp spun. "Here's lemonade for Sambo's brother!" A wet pulp squashed against his cheek and trickled down his high-standing collar.

Finally they let him escape, but catcalls and hoots followed him all the way upstairs to where Lizzie, hearing the commotion, waited. She poured water from a cracked pitcher into a big, white china bowl, and bathed his face and wrists. An ugly red scratch ran from his forehead to his chin.

"We're going home, Asa." It was a flat statement. Lizzie had had enough. Next morning before the first breakfast bell, they were on their way back to High Rock.

There, in Rock Cottage, they spent the autumn of 1860 and the following spring. Each day Lizzie grew more weary. Her baby, a girl, was born on May 22 and was named Ellen Chase. She was a delicate child, and her short life, ending in 1867, was almost as stormy as the turbulent days of civil strife through which she lived.

A Suit of Lincoln Green

DAVID, the oldest of the Hutchinson brothers, was a dyed-in-the-wool Democrat. That was bad. He also was a stanch admirer of Buchanan. And that, to John, was worse. John always said the American eagle grew bald from humiliation when Jimmy Buchanan was elected and just never had the spirit to feather up again.

The feud between the brothers—one a Democrat, the other a Republican—reached such a point that by 1860 they were scarcely speaking. That was the way it was when Lincoln was nominated. Neighbors at Lynn joked about John's wearing a Lincoln-and-Liberty button and David's pinning on a picture of Buchanan, fluffy hair and all. Of course, Buchanan wasn't even in the running, but Dave said he didn't care. He'd rather wear Buchanan's smooth face than that of a Simple Susan from Illinois whom the papers called dazed and shattered and utterly foolish to boot. John in answer recited a revised "Abou Ben Adhem."

James Buchanan, may his tribe *decrease*!
 Awoke one night from a strange dream of peace,
 And saw within the curtains of his bed—
 Making his t'other eye to squint with dread—
 Old Jackson writing in a book of gold;
 Exceeding Rye had made Buchanan bold,
 And to the stern ex-president he said:
 "Wha—what writ'st thou?" The spirit shook his head,
 The while he answered, with the voice of old;
 "The names of those who ne'er their country sold!"
 "And is mine one?" asked J. B. "Nary!" cried
 The General, with a frown. Buchanan sighed,
 And groaned, and turned himself upon his bed

And took another nip of "rye," then said:
"Well, ere thou lay the record on the shelf,
Write me at heart, as one who sold himself;
"Democs" and "Rye" so long my spirits were,
That when the "Crisis" came—I wasn't there!"
The General wrote, and vanished; the next night
He came again, in more appalling plight,
And showed those names that all "true men" detest;
And lo! Buchanan's name led all the rest!

Nothing annoyed John quite so much as the mean things David said about the homely lawyer from Illinois. John had met Lincoln way back in '51 when the troupe were playing in Springfield. A tall, gaunt man had come in late, elbowing his way through a crowd that jammed the hall to take a front seat where his long legs had plenty of room to stretch. The program had begun and John's big voice was booming out Henry Russell's *The Ship on Fire*, a bloodcurdler that began with a mighty thunderstorm and ended with the wave-lashed, tossing vessel bursting into crimson flame.

Fire! Fire! it was raging above and below,
And the cheeks of the sailors grew pale at the sight,
And their eyes glistn'd wild in the glare of the light;
'Twas vain o'er the ravage the waters to drip,
The pitiless flame was the lord of the ship,
And the smoke in thick wreaths, mounted higher and higher,
Oh God it is fearful to perish by Fire!

After the concert Lincoln came up and, in his kindly way, congratulated the singers. They talked for a few minutes about the slavery situation. That was the last John saw of him, although he followed the Lincoln-Douglas debates carefully and was mighty disappointed when Honest Abe lost out on the senatorship.

When the Republicans nominated Lincoln, John and Asa threw themselves enthusiastically into the campaign. Their two troupes hurried across the nation, filling engagements so rapidly that their diary entries crowded the pages and spilled down

margins. John covered the eastern states and New England; Asa went swiftly west to towns throughout Ohio, Illinois, and Indiana. David sulked at home. The last thing he heard, as John's carriage rolled away, was a baritone voice singing:

Old "Honest Abe" we will elect,
In a few days—few days;
The Loco-focos we'll reject,
And send Buchanan home.

A country trembling on the brink of secession offered even greater stimulus to the singing Yankees than did abolition. The dreadful picture was clear and vivid in John's uncompromising mind: The South was only biding its time to destroy the Union, yet one wing of the Democratic party had nominated a Kentuckian and another had chosen Douglas and squatter sovereignty, and the stupid, unrealistic Constitutional Unionists had ignored slavery entirely in a platform weak as milk. That left only Lincoln and the Republicans to preserve the Union.

"I'm not saying that Abe Lincoln is perfect," John stormed at mild Fanny, "but he's the best there is. It'd been a switzel-sight better if the Wigwam boys in Chicago had come out strong for the destruction of slavery everywhere instead of only opposing it in the territories."

Maliciousness twinkled in her eyes. "Playin' cards fer gin cock-tails an' drinkin' likker 'fore breakfast ain't the makin's of a political convention. When Chicago's mayor raided resorts of ill repute, didn't he find delegates? They warn't makin' a platform."

"Republicans don't drink no more than Democrats," John said stoutly. He was muttering when he slammed the front door to go to the printer's.

He returned in better humor. Under his arm was a great printer's proof of the American flag. He'd had it engraved on wood and run off in red, white, and blue. "Here," he said proudly, unrolling the damp sheet, "is the Hutchinsons' new

poster. We're going to use it everywhere we sing from now until the war's over."

"What war?" asked Fanny.

"The war that's coming when Lincoln's elected."

The Hutchinsons' colorful poster appeared in hundreds of small towns, and tacked beneath it was a long list of Lincoln campaign songs that John collected, set to music, or boldly borrowed words and all. A few were violently anti-Buchanan, some were abolitionist, and many more praised Lincoln as a "chief so good and great," a "star of freedom," and the "choice of the nation." A favorite was *A Suit of Lincoln Green*. John sang it, clad in a dark green cape.

A uniform we *soon* shall see
For true men; 'twill be seen,
Republicans! that garb must be
Of sober Lincoln green!

Excited Republicans, marching in torchlight from a thousand flares, clamored for Hutchinson campaign music. Political parades from Maine to Ohio shouted snatches from songs made popular by both John and Asa. Thousands of Yankees eulogized Honest Abe in words selected and arranged by the brothers. So great, indeed, became the demand for campaign songs that John published two political songsters. Horace Greeley, editor of the *New York Tribune* and for years a close friend, helped him get out *Hutchinson's Republican Songster for 1860*. This slight seventy-two-page booklet reprinted the Republican platform and contained the words, but not the music, of fifty stirring songs. Selling for ten cents, it was advertised as the "best campaign book of the season."

John also published, with the assistance of Benjamin Jepson, a New Haven musician, *The Connecticut Wide-Awake Songster*. These two campaign collections, together with George W. Bungay's *The Bobolink Minstrel, or Republican Songster*, swept the country and furnished Lincoln admirers much of the music used during the campaign.

Lincoln's election was the signal for the march of the southern states from the Union. As South Carolina, Florida, Georgia, and Alabama seceded, Brother David deviled John with a Copperhead version of the well-known *Wait for the Wagon*.

South Carolina, a fiery little thing,
Said she wouldn't stay in a government where Cotton wasn't King;
So she called her Southern sisters—they one and all replied

Wait for the wagon and we'll all take a ride.

Georgia is the driver,

Carolina by her side;

Brave Louisiana cracks the whip,

And they all take a ride.

Finally John's meager patience ran out. He was sick and ill in body. Months of constant traveling and endless concerts in Lincoln's behalf had left him with a chest ailment, and the fact that Lincoln was not a majority president rankled. His disgust and anger flared suddenly at David, who believed that a compromise between North and South could be reached.

"You're just like too many northern Democrats!" John was either going to win this family row or know why. "You sit around with songs in your mouth that you can't sing and you don't know the meaning of. Folks like you are leadin' us right into war. You say 'compromise' and you sing 'anti-Lincoln,' an' all the time the South is gettin' ready to fight."

David swung a leg listlessly. "You're a stupid fool, John. South Carolina would never dare to fire on the flag. They're bluffing, an' if you hadn't helped to elect that clown lawyer, they'd stopped long before this. If Lincoln will meet 'em half way, the secessionists will be a joke, even in South Carolina. They're bluffin', I tell you."

Four days later, Fort Sumter was fired upon. Chattering telegraph keys hurried the news of Major Robert Anderson's surrender throughout the North. Then David, meek and crest-fallen, offered his apology. "You were right, and I was wrong," he said to John. "I didn't believe the South would go this far. It's up to Lincoln now."

The President acted swiftly. His call for seventy-five thousand volunteers brought farm lads and city workers tumbling into recruit offices. Soon the squeak of fifes and the roll of drums beat the rhythm of war into raw regiments that mustered in every state of the severed Union. Overnight the nation divided itself into the Blue and the Gray.

Regiment after regiment rendezvoused in New Hampshire and the Old Bay State. At Fort Warren, in Boston Harbor, volunteers of the Second Battalion of Infantry erected hasty breastworks and log defenses. John heard them singing. He recognized the tune at once as *Say, Brothers, Will You Meet Us*, an old revival hymn that had been published in Methodist hymnals for years. But the sweaty troops of the Second Battalion weren't using the old words; they were singing:

John Brown's body lies a mouldering in the grave,

John Brown's body lies a mouldering in the grave,

John Brown's body lies a mouldering in the grave,

His soul goes marching on!

Glory Hally, Hallelujah! Glory Hally Hallelujah!

Glory Hally, Hallelujah! His soul goes marching on!

Here was a song with vigorous music and catchy words. John listened attentively as three other verses came pouring out, the men beating time with shoddy shoes, pick handles, and army-issue spades.

He's gone to be a soldier in the army of the Lord,

He's gone to be a soldier in the army of the Lord,

He's gone to be a soldier in the army of the Lord,

His soul goes marching on!

His pet lambs will meet him on the way—

His pet lambs will meet him on the way—

His pet lambs will meet him on the way—

They go marching on!

They will hang Jeff Davis to a tree!

They will hang Jeff Davis to a tree!

They will hang Jeff Davis to a tree!

As they march along!

The last "glory hallelujah" died away in gales of laughter. "Where did you get that song about the hero of Harpers Ferry?" John inquired of a rawboned sergeant.

"Shucks, Mister, that ain't about Harpers Ferry Brown at all." He spit a long thin stream of chewing juice at his boot. "That's John Brown over there." He pointed to a soldier in a trench squad. "The song's about him."

"What do you mean?"

"Ain't nothing much to tell. He come in the battalion, and first thing you know, when he was late fer muster er somethin', we'd call out, 'Come, old fellow, you ought to be at it if you're goin' to help us free the slaves,' or 'This can't be John Brown—why John Brown is dead.' And then somebody'd yell, 'Yes, yes, poor old John Brown is dead; his body lies mouldering in the grave.' Before we knowed it, we had us some verses and was singing 'em. It's a helluva good song, ain't it?"

John nodded. Here was a war song when battle music was scarce, and he wanted to introduce it at concerts. About a week later the first printed copy of the John Brown song was issued as a broadside by Charles Sprague Hall at Charlestown. So great was the demand for this edition that it was quickly exhausted and Hall made arrangements to reprint. The second edition, also a broadside, contained the music as well as the words. The copyright date was July 16, 1861.

But long before July, the enthusiastic Hutchinsons were popularizing the original *John Brown Song* in the camps, at recruiting stations, and at soldiers' aid societies. Ellsworth's Zouaves, a regiment recruited from New York's fire department, sang it lustily as they stepped to the music of a mounted band; the Thirteenth New York marched from its Brooklyn armory shouting, "His pet lambs will meet him on the way"; and Camp Dennison in Pennsylvania rang with the defiant words and easy music as the Second Ohio Infantry broke ranks after the sunset gun. Oliver Ditson soon published a version. By the close of 1862 innumerable new stanzas had been composed by army wits, minstrel troupes, and variety comedians.

Meanwhile John had made plans to sing for the Army of the Potomac. Shocked by rumors that troops guzzled and whored and flocked to bawdy entertainments where "lewd women with tights and without tights" danced on elevated platforms, he went to Washington to secure official approval for the trip. He and the Reverend Robert B. Yard, an old friend now chaplain of the First New Jersey Volunteers, worked out an itinerary; then John began the tedious procedure of getting permission. Washington was a city of confusion, filled with scheming politicians, unctious officeseekers, gold-braided staff officers, and thousands of troops. It was almost impossible to get an appointment with Simon Cameron, the secretary of war.

While he waited for an appointment, the Hutchinsons attended a levee at the White House, where John renewed his acquaintance with the President. He must have hoped that Lincoln would request a song, for in the Hutchinson carriage was the old scarred melodeon that had furnished accompaniments for more than twenty years.

Staff officers in full dress, resplendent with brass buttons and heavy epaulets, mingled with civilians in somber black suits and stiff gates-ajar collars. A sprinkling of ladies, including Mrs. Lincoln, bowed and fluttered and made small talk. Nathaniel P. Willis, a skilled paragrapher, wandered aimlessly about the Red Room, gathering notes for his widely read column, "Lookings-On At the War," which appeared regularly in the *Home Journal*. Little Tad, in long trousers and a semimilitary coat that buttoned to the neck, stayed close to the President.

During the course of the evening, Lincoln asked the Hutchinsons to sing. "This was pleasant enough," said John, "but like most pleasures in this world, it had its accompanying drawbacks." In the first place, the key to the piano could not be found. When it was finally procured, the instrument, "like the country, was so shockingly out of tune that it could scarcely be played upon." Then the piano stool could not be found. John concluded that "music seemed to be at a serious discount in the presidential mansion."

The rattling old keys in the rickety box of wires served well enough for *The War Drums Are Beating—Up Soldiers and Fight*, but when Lincoln, holding Tad by the hand, asked for *The Ship on Fire*, John sent for the melodeon. Once again, as at Springfield in 1851, Lincoln enjoyed the dramatic narrative. The look of care and anxiety which had clouded his face all evening gave way to his better known smile.

Legend has it that the President sent the Hutchinsons away that evening with a gift to remember him by, an old-fashioned brass thimble said to have been used by his mother, Nancy Hanks. But John himself seems never to have mentioned receiving any such token of regard.

A week later John had his appointment with Secretary Cameron, whom he found kind and considerate. With the facetious admonition not to sing "secesh," the secretary of war issued a pass permitting "'The Hutchinson Family' to pass over bridges and ferries, and within the main lines of the Army of the Potomac. They will be allowed to sing to the soldiers, and this permit shall continue good until 1st February, 1862." No doubt the busy secretary of war thought the Hutchinsons could do little harm in Virginia if Lincoln had requested them to sing at a White House reception.

The troupe were cleared by the provost marshal and then crossed the Potomac to proceed directly to General William B. Franklin's division, which was quartered near Fairfax Seminary in Virginia. Some thirty thousand men were camped in the vicinity. At the first concert, held in the chapel of the seminary, more than a thousand soldiers from the First New Jersey Regiment crowded the pews and overflowed into the aisles. Most of the men were opposed to slavery, but a few were bitterly insistent that they were not fighting a "nigger war" and attended the concert with the avowed purpose of breaking it up. The Hutchinsons' reputation as radical abolitionists once more had run before them.

The President himself had made it clear that the civil struggle was not a war for emancipation; General George B.

McClellan had officially declared "that there should be no interference with slavery"; and when General John C. Fremont had proclaimed all slaves free in Missouri, Lincoln had set aside the proclamation. Abolitionists writhed at these events. Passionate John Greenleaf Whittier expressed the sentiments of the radical school in his so-called hymn of liberty set to the tune of Martin Luther's *A Mighty Fortress is Our God*. Not daring to sing such strong abolitionist sentiments for Lincoln, the Hutchinsons were quite willing to try it on the troops.

The program began quietly enough with *The Old Granite State*, but it moved rapidly on to antislavery numbers. The soldiers fidgeted. They had come to hear racy, popular tunes, not solemn temperance glees and emancipation drivel. Whittier's song, uncompromising and antagonistic, stirred them to protest. As John began the third verse, he heard hisses.

What gives the wheat-fields blades of steel?

What points the rebel cannon?

What sits the roaring rabble's hell

On the star-spangled pennon?

What breaks the oath

Of the men of the South?

What whets the knife

For the Union's life?

Hark to the answer: Slavery!

By the close of the stanza the audience was in such a hubbub that Major David Hatfield rose, turned to the men, and said further interruptions must cease. "Those guilty of creating a disturbance will be put out," Hatfield ordered.

Immediately a tall officer wearing the insignia of the medical corps rose up. "Sir," he called above the confusion, "if you want me out, you better come and put me out."

"I can put you out," yelled Hatfield, "but if I can't, I have a regiment that will!"

"Put him out, put him out!"

"Let him stay, let him stay!"

The troopers called and cursed until Chaplain Yard together

with James B. Merwin, a temperance worker, managed to quiet them. Then, to soothe ruffled spirits, the Hutchinsons sang *No Tear in Heaven*.

No tear shall be in Heaven; no gath'ring gloom
Shall o'er that glorious landscape ever come;
No tear shall fall in sadness o'er those flowers,
That breathe their fragrance thro' celestial bowers.

"Christ a'mighty," muttered a corporal after the Hutchinsons had finished. "What goddamned whining! There'll be hell to pay about this."

He was right. Early the next day an orderly presented General Philip Kearney's compliments to Yard and requested him to report to brigade headquarters. Kearney, commanding the First New Jersey Brigade of Franklin's Division, was no volunteer who had won his command by stroking Washington politicians. He was a hard-bitten professional soldier with years of experience in action. Chaplain Yard had reason to fear him.

Kearney sat frosty-eyed and surly while Yard stammered out an explanation of the affair in the seminary chapel. Then, without explanation, he ordered Yard to relinquish the keys to the chapel and to return with the Hutchinsons.

When the singers arrived, Kearney opened without preamble. "Details of programs for troops in this command should first be submitted to proper authority."

John's knowledge of military procedure was meager, and his ability to handle a man like Kearney was even less. "General," he said, "I have a permit to sing from the secretary of war. I am no stranger to the soldiers, whatever the officers may think and feel on the subject."

Had John spent hours on it, he could not have worked out a remark that would irritate Kearney more.

"I reign supreme here," snapped the brigadier. "You are abolitionists. I think as much of a rebel as I do of an abolitionist. I will not allow your concerts to go on."

The interview came to an abrupt end. But no sooner had

Yard and the Hutchinsons returned to their quarters than they received a message from Kearney confirming his verbal orders that no further singing in the camp would be tolerated. At the same time he forwarded a full account to General Franklin's headquarters. Franklin immediately ordered Major Hatfield to furnish him, "as soon as practicable," with a copy of the songs sung in the chapel. Yard and the Hutchinsons sat down to copy all the words. These were sent to Franklin by special orderly.

Within twenty-four hours after the concert, McClellan, commanding the Army of the Potomac, had read the full account and had noted Franklin's endorsement that the songs were incendiary and that "if these people are allowed to go on, they will demoralize the army." McClellan must have agreed, for the next day General Orders No. 3, issued by Franklin from his headquarters in Alexandria, were delivered to the Hutchinsons: "By command of the Major General Commanding, U.S.A.; the permit given to the Hutchinson Family to sing in the camps, and their pass to cross the Potomac, are hereby revoked, and they will not be allowed to sing to the troops." At the same time the troupe were told to vacate their quarters.

Back in Washington, the Hutchinsons hastened to lay their case before Secretary Chase. The secretary carried a copy of Whittier's inflammatory poem to a meeting of Lincoln's cabinet. After reading the verses, the President is reported to have declared, "I don't see anything very bad about that. If any of the commanders want the Hutchinsons to sing to their soldiers, and invite them, they can go."

Such weak support was of little comfort. The Hutchinsons had hoped Lincoln would send them back, with presidential approval, to the Army of the Potomac. Then "Little Mac" McClellan, Franklin, and the evil-tempered Kearney would have to eat their words. The President was too wise for that.

The incident, minor as it was, grew big with the telling. Radical abolitionists flooded congressmen with letters of protest; journalists spilled columns of ink describing the "dreadful"

episode; Horace Greeley wrote of the "peremptory, ignominious suppression and expulsion of the Hutchinsons"; and Whittier penned a cordial note of support.

"I am glad to know that there is any *sing* in my verses," he wrote from Amesbury on March 6. "Of course I can have no objection to thy use of them. If thee can get any music out of them, I shall be pleased and gratified. Whatever General McClellan may do with my rhymes, I am thankful that Congress is putting it out of his power to 'send back' fugitive slaves as well as singers. After all, I do not think it strange that a Quaker's song should be thought out of place in the army."



Despite official policy, most Northerners, by the time the war swung into its second year, had convinced themselves that the conflict's real purpose was to destroy slavery everywhere. The Republican plan of opposing only the extension of slavery was laughed away. Neither Lincoln nor his generals could stop public opinion by executive order or military proclamation. McClellan failed every time he tried it. He interdicted the singing of the John Brown song, and his troops only laughed.

An observer who saw sixteen thousand of "Little Mac's" men on their way to Alexandria reported to the London *Spectator*: "With colors flying and bands playing regiment after regiment filed past us. In the gray evening light the long endless files bore a phantom aspect. The men were singing, shouting, cheering. Under cover of darkness they chanted John Brown's hymn in defiance of McClellan's orders, and the heavy tramp of a thousand feet beat time to that strange weird melody."

Even McClellan's personal staff differed with him. The Hutchinsons, after their expulsion from Virginia, received a special invitation from officers of McClellan's bodyguard to sing to them in private. They also presented an antislavery program in the House of Representatives, singing *The Slave's Appeal*, which, wrote John, "created a great sensation."

But Washington was too full of Union men, Copperheads, and doughfaces for the troupe to receive generous support there. So John led his singers to tolerant, kindly Philadelphia, and thence to Boston for a sweep through upper New England before starting west for Minnesota. All along the route newspapers either praised or damned him for ultra-abolitionist sentiments.

"This community has certainly heard enough of 'old John Brown,'" sputtered the *Republican* of Goshen, New York. "His insane courage, which prompted him to commit murder, treason, and rebellion, that thereby an insurrection of slaves might be created, has doubtless caused his 'body to lie mouldering in the ground'; yet we do not believe that 'his soul is now marching to glory.' Darkies may believe it; but we don't."

Sometimes, as in Easton, Pennsylvania, the Hutchinsons were held up as fiends by the Democratic press and as apostles of freedom by a Republican editor. "We trust no gentleman or lady entertaining Democratic or Union sentiments will go near them," said the *Easton Argus*. "Let them sing their abolition trash for negro-worshippers alone. They are unworthy of the patronage of loyal people. Abolitionism has been the curse of our Country and this so-called Hutchinson family have labored and sung for years to fan the flames."

The *Easton Free Press* disagreed. "Liberty—freedom—bravery—truth—humanity—humility—purity—are the natural breathings of their numbers, and to hear one of their concerts is to become a better man or woman."

Bitterness increased as Union forces fought grimly to split the Confederacy. Rosters of the dead and wounded and the missing grew longer and longer after Bull Run, Antietam, Gettysburg, Vicksburg, Chattanooga, and Atlanta. Burnside replaced McClellan and Hooker replaced Burnside. Three times the wily Lee slipped through the valleys of the mountains to invade the North. What Lincoln had hoped would be a decisive three months' campaign turned into a long, stubborn war that taxed the strength of the North and exhausted the South.

Veterans, many of them wounded and all of them weary, came home to loiter on town squares and let the sun seep into fever-racked bones. John saw them at concerts and noted their pallor and lassitude.

As the war news grew worse, the Hutchinsons sang harder than ever to cheer and to comfort. Abby Hutchinson Patton left her home in Orange to lift her sweet voice once again in behalf of the Union and to shame Copperheads with new songs of hope and patriotism.

Public taste was changing. Earlier war tunes—*The Flag of Our Union Forever; Brave Boys Are They, Gone at Their Country's Call; The War Drums Are Beating; We Will Rally Round the Flag, Boys*—were giving way to haunting music conceived in sorrow. These narrated the grief of wives and sweethearts, told of the lonely bivouac where the Spanish creepers hung, and asked, "Who shall care for mother now?" They included *The Girl I Left Behind Me; The Faded Coat of Blue; Just Before the Battle, Mother; and Weeping, Sad and Lonely*, better known as *When This Cruel War Is Over*.

Perhaps the greatest of these—a song that instantly became popular and probably is one of the best remembered of all Civil War songs—was Walter Kittredge's *Tenting on the Old Camp Ground*.

We're tenting tonight on the old camp ground,

Give us a song to cheer

Our weary hearts, a song of home,

And friends we love so dear.

Many are the hearts that are weary tonight,

Wishing for the war to cease;

Many are the hearts that are looking for the right,

To see the dawn of peace.

Tenting tonight, tenting tonight,

Tenting on the old camp ground.

Kittredge was a young New Hampshire musician whom the Hutchinsons had known for years. They had sung together

and, once or twice, had gone on tour together. In 1861 he published the *Union Song Book*. Just before entering the army, Kittredge wrote Asa that he had composed a new song and asked if it could be published. Ditson had issued several war songs for Asa and, of course, had been printing Hutchinson music since the forties. It was only natural, then, that Asa should suggest to Kittredge that Ditson be given the manuscript of *Tenting on the Old Camp Ground*.

On April 5, 1864, Kittredge replied from his home at Merimack, asking Asa to send the song to Ditson, "as I trust your arrangements would be good, or better than mine."

Asa wrote Ditson two days later. The publisher replied on the ninth, consenting to publish Kittredge's song. He would allow two and a half cents on each copy sold and would supply the Hutchinsons with copies to be sold at concerts for eight cents apiece. This was satisfactory both to Kittredge and Asa, and Ditson soon forwarded a receipt for the tenting song and for two others: *Stripes and Stars* and *The Triple-Hued Banner*. Although he accepted all three, the publisher said he did not "have faith in two of them." All proved successful. Within two years Asa and Kittredge had realized a thousand dollars apiece from *Tenting on the Old Camp Ground*.

It was first sung at Old High Rock with Asa carrying the bass, John the solo parts, and all the children joining in the chorus. Perhaps Kittredge himself was present. Later he told John how the song came to be written. The night before Kittredge was drafted into the army, he could not sleep. "He thought," said John, "of the many dear boys already gone over to the unseen shore, killed in battle or dead from disease in the camps, of the unknown graves, of the sorrowful homes; of the weary waiting for the end of the cruel strife, and the sorrow in the camps, of the brave boys waiting for the coming battle, which might be their last. Suddenly the thoughts began to take form in his mind. He arose and began to write."

The troupes of both John and Asa, armed with the most recent patriotic songs, sang steadily. Asa crossed the border into Canada with Lizzie and their two sons, Freddy and Denny. Little Denny, "not much larger than a pepper box," was said to "sing like a nightingale and declaim like a Demosthenes or a Cicero." He delighted Canadians with his *Little Bird Song* and a comic stump speech on the "spirit of the times." Abby, Asa's daughter, appeared in a Highland costume.

Delighted audiences in Windsor and London sent the troupe back to the United States with handsome profits and excessive praise. Only the London *Free Press* struck a sour note. "Let them omit the semi-patriotic dolors of another people," it declared viciously, "and while amongst us give songs which have a different tendency and having some spirit."

Meanwhile John was pushing steadily toward Minnesota, making new friends and greeting old acquaintances all along the route. His press notices became more enthusiastic the closer he came to the Mississippi. He liked to sing to the men of Illinois and Indiana and Minnesota, and he always sang more freely in the Valley of Democracy, where, he said, the free air of the plains mingled with the strength of the great river. The Middle West was not his home and never replaced New England in his affections, but he loved its tasseled fields of corn, delighted in its woods and creeks and valleys, and enjoyed its plain folk intent upon molding a safe and secure life for themselves and their children.

The Emancipation Proclamation and Lincoln's nomination for a second term put an end to the Hutchinsons' peace of mind and once again stirred the coals of political hate. Northern "nigger-haters" accused the President of forgetting the real nature of the war and of repudiating the platform upon which he had been elected. Even Brother David, who had supported Lincoln after Fort Sumter was bombarded, turned cool again. Throughout the North, John listened dispiritedly to a fresh outburst of anti-Lincoln music. *Good Morning, Master Lincoln!*

was typical. It was sung, as were so many popular songs, to the tune of the old favorite, *Wait for the Wagon*.

Good morning, Master Lincoln!
How do you feel to-day?
I think the joke is over now,
You'll move before next May.
We've got another tenant,
They call him little Mac,
You'll find your house in Springfield yet,
And better you go back!
Please take your wagon,
Please take your wagon,
Please take your wagon,
For the last little ride.

Although the Hutchinsons did not issue a new songster for this campaign, they did introduce many Republican songs. When Democrats sang that Lincoln was taking the last little ride back to Springfield, the aroused Hutchinsons struck up *Hold On, Abraham*; the *Nomination Song* ("then rally again from the prairie and wood"); and *Abe Lincoln's Union Wagon*. The words of this last were written by James D. Gay, an army song dealer and publisher in New York, and were sung to *Wait for the Wagon*.

King Cotton may be Master of those who bend the knee,
But cannot rule a people, who ever shall be free,
As are the wings of heaven whose every thought and deed,
Shall emanate from Justice and not from cotton seed.
Then wait for the wagon,
Wait for the wagon,
Wait for the wagon,
And we'll all take a ride.

Oberlin students heard and were thrilled; veterans in towns with strange names—Kalamazoo, Mankato, Des Moines—waved forage caps and cheered for the Great Emancipator; St. Louis citizens, who had hissed the abolitionist troupe only

a few years earlier, tendered a reception of the "kindest nature." If now and again an editor ridiculed and poked fun, John didn't care. He knew his singing did not "sound like ventriloquism," and he did not mind cutting remarks about his high-standing collar.

"John wears a shirt collar of the Byronic style," jeered an enemy, "... and it looks as if he had made a mistake in putting his shirt on, and put it on wrong end up. John's horse shirt collar is prodigious; it would be just about right for a shirt collar for an elephant, or would make a good shroud for Tom Thumb, or a stay-sail for a '74 ship, for a Fourth of July flag, after the stars are all wiped out, or a cover for an emigrant wagon, or an army tent."



Wearied by weeks of travel, the Hutchinsons sang their way toward home. Crowds cheered their Lincoln sentiments in the City of Brotherly Love and in Baltimore. The tour closed in Washington, where the streets, remembered John's daughter, "were up to the hubs with yellow slush, impassable except for the army trucks, drawn by mules—with much rattling of chains and leathers, and urgings by the negro drivers in no gentle tones."

Little Viola was eager to see the completed painting of Lincoln's first reading of the Emancipation Proclamation to his Cabinet, which Frank B. Carpenter had sketched out in bold strokes early in 1864. The gentle, meditative artist had been intimately acquainted with the Hutchinsons for years. Viola called him Uncle Frank. He worked both in the dining room and the East Room of the presidential mansion, and Viola was privileged to run in at any suitable time to watch and chat. "The colored door-keepers all knew me," she said, "and allowed me to pass without question." Sometimes, although not often, Mrs. Lincoln sent her servant with a bouquet for the little girl.

Once Carpenter asked John to pose in place of Stanton when the secretary of war could not escape official duties to attend a

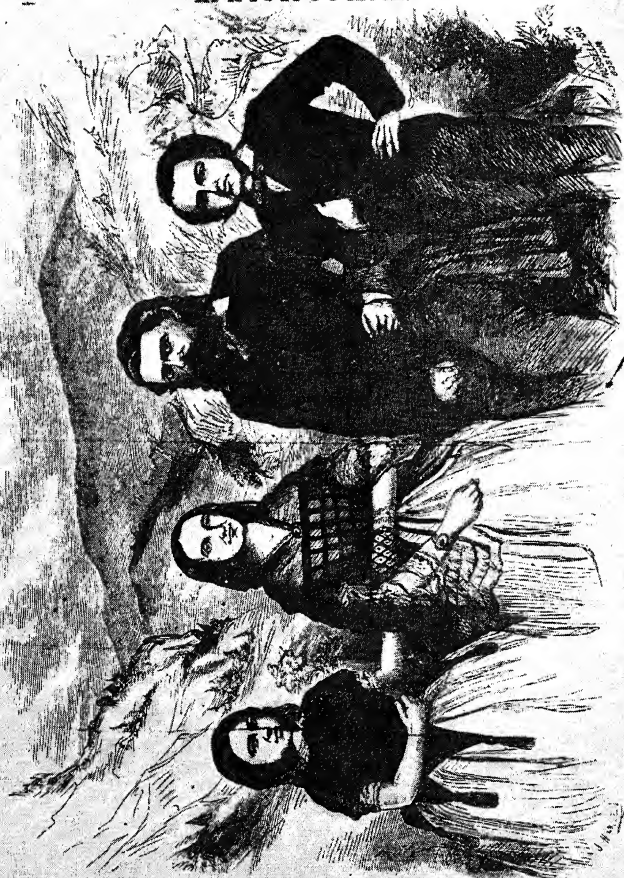
THE HITCHINSON FAMILY!

At
On

HAVE ARRIVED, AND WILL SING

Evening,

AT A 1-4 TO 8 O'CLOCK.



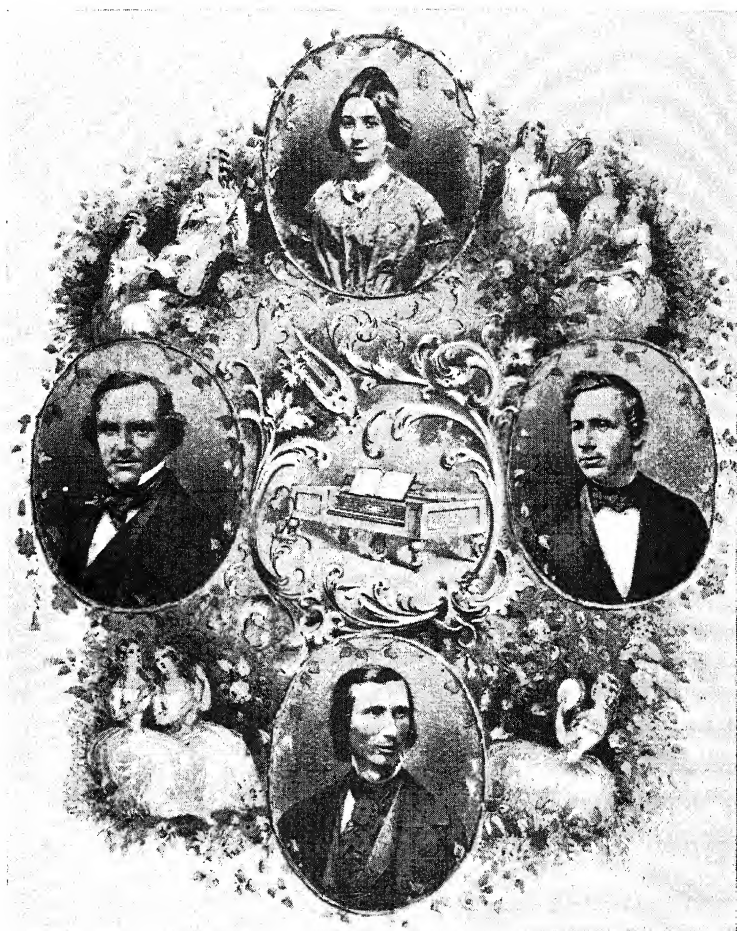
JOHN AT THE HEAD,
WITH
FANNIE, HENRY AND VIOLA.

TICKETS:

CENTS:

TO BE HAD AT THE DOOR AND AT THE POST OFFICE

A CONCERT ANNOUNCEMENT



THE ALLEGHANIAN

sitting. When John told Carpenter that the western tour had netted five thousand dollars, the artist sighed. "Even the sale of signed artist's proofs of my picture at fifty dollars each won't bring me that much," he said.

Old High Rock looked unusually inviting when the Hutchinsons finally reached home. Washington, thought John, is the most exciting place in the world, but Lynn is the most peaceful. He settled down to a winter of rest, singing only at regional charity bazaars and meetings of the United States Christian Commission.

The end of the war was in sight. Early spring of 1865 brought news of Union victories almost everywhere. The net was closing about the butternut-clad "Rebels" in the Carolinas, where "War-is-Hell" Sherman thrust savagely at the Confederate Johnston. Admiral Porter captured Fort Fisher and Wilmington. On April 9 came the news that Lee had surrendered to Grant at Appomattox Court House. The great battle had been won. The Union was saved. Slavery, which the Hutchinsons had fought against for more than twenty years, was destroyed forever.

Five days after Appomattox, Lincoln was assassinated in Ford's Theatre. Overnight the joy of the North turned to deep grief.

Even as the martyred President lay dying, composers were jotting down the first notes of their death songs. Soon Lincoln dirges, funeral marches, laments, and songs of sorrow poured from the presses of both small and large publishing houses. They filled the music shops and were distributed as handbills and broadsides. Many of these sheets were decorated with funeral ornaments in deep black. Others relied upon specially cut type to create the spirit of grief. A few appeared in color, but these generally depicted the funeral cortege or the bier.

Henry Tolman of Boston took what were said to be Mrs. Lincoln's words while the President lay dying and incorporated them into one of the more tragic of the death songs, *Live But One Moment!* It went through several editions.

SINGIN' YANKEES

Live but one moment!
Speak but once more!
Speak to the children,
One word I implore!
O breathe but one accent
To cheer this sad heart,
Live but one moment
Ere we must part.

Other songs of this type that the Hutchinsons sang included *The Death Knell Is Tolling*; *Farewell, Father, Friend and Guardian*; *Lincoln's Dying Refrain*; *Lincoln's Grave*; and *A Nation Mourns Her Martyr'd Son*. The tone of all of these was expressed in *The Nation Mourns*.

From all churches
Sad and slow,
Toll the bells
The knell of woe.

And the knell did ring throughout the nation. All the way from Washington to Springfield, heavy drums and sober trumpets greeted the President's body with Lincoln requiems and Lincoln funeral marches. There was no more need for a suit of Lincoln green.

The Lean Years

LIKE a keen-eyed, shrewd old eagle, John perched on the pinnacle of High Rock to take stock of the nation at peace. He saw a prosperous North and a prostrate South. The Civil War had covered industrial sections with a blanket of profits and optimism and had obscured the plantation country with a pall of ashes and despondency. Far to the westward, United States cavalymen, colorful in blue uniforms with yellow stripes on their breeches, were relentlessly pushing the plains Indians from ancestral hunting grounds to make room for an army of railroad builders, miners, cowboys, and sheepherders who were subduing the last American frontier.

The Union stood strong and sturdy. Abolition had finally triumphed on the battlefield, and the slave was a free man and a citizen. John was satisfied. The millennium, he chuckled softly, finally had come as the Hutchinsons always knew it would.

The war years had effected changes within the family too. A son, Judson Whittier, named after Judson and John Greenleaf Whittier, was born to John and Fanny on February 17, 1862. Jennie Lind, Judson's daughter, died on March 15, 1863, and Brother David passed away four months later. Then on September 20, 1868, Polly died in her eighty-third year at the old family home on the Souhegan. She was buried from the schoolhouse where her children had learned their lessons and was laid to rest in the peaceful Milford cemetery. She was the mother of sixteen children, the grandmother of fifty-two, and the great-grandmother of twenty-eight.

Not for long could events either national or personal keep

the Hutchinsons from the road. The defeat of the South, however, changed the whole pattern of their concert programs. No longer was there reason to sing for abolition, and no longer were stirring appeals to patriotism welcomed enthusiastically by veterans and their families. Returned soldiers, full of memories of Bull Run, Gettysburg, and Sherman's march to the sea, wanted music that was light and gay. The bivouac and the battlefield were too fresh in their memories for them any longer to enjoy the martial airs of Root and Cady.

So during the seventies the Tribe of Asa replaced the simple glees, anthems, and dramatic songs of the roaring forties and the war songs of the sixties with comic and sentimental numbers and with the Negro spirituals that were rapidly sweeping the nation. The Fisk Jubilee Singers set the style with voices of African smoothness when they sang slow songs like *Swing Low* and fast ones like *Josh'a Fit De Battle*.

At one time or another Asa used all the new Negro music, but his favorite spiritual was *Nobody Knows De Trouble I See*. He himself was pondering deeply the mysteries of life and was returning, like many persons after middle age, to the church. Although his voice was not suited to the spiritual, his growing religious convictions gave him assurance and deep piety when he sang such words as these:

I see brudder Moses yonder,
And I think I ought to know him,
For I know him by his garment,
He's a blessing here tonight,
He's a blessing here tonight,
And I think I ought to know him,
He's a blessing here tonight.

"When Asa sings, he *means* it," said a Delano, Minnesota, editor in April 1876, "and there's a world of religion in earnest song!" Asa did mean it, for no member of the family was more devout than he became. He had always shunned the foibles of phrenology and spiritualism that his brothers had courted, and

to the end of his life, he was convinced that both doctrines had hastened Jesse's death and Judson's suicide.

In late September 1877, when the trees on the New Hampshire hills were touched with color and the Souhegan ran still and deep, Asa made a pilgrimage to Milford. He was ready to give his soul to the Lord. A Baptist minister stood waiting. Behind stretched a crowd of villagers, John and Ludlow Patton, Abby's husband, among them. After Asa had been immersed in the river of his boyhood, he and the pastor knelt upon a granite boulder to repeat the Lord's Prayer. The rays of a sinking sun touched briefly upon two doves that for one brief moment hovered over the kneeling pair.

Asa's cross had been heavy. Freddy, only twenty-one, had died in Hutchinson in October 1873, and Lizzie was not well. She had never quite recovered from the birth of her last child or from grief at her death. Long years of concert singing and the persistent campaign against slavery had left her sick at heart. And when the Civil War was over and the Boys in Blue came marching home again, she immediately threw herself into the fight for temperance and woman suffrage.

Lizzie's last concert was sung at Rushford, Minnesota, on December 19, 1874, and her final song was the one she loved best, *Recollections of Childhood*. It was very much her own song. J. L. Peters of New York and Chicago had printed it under the title *My Trundle Bed; or, Recollections of Childhood* "as sung by Lizzie Hutchinson, of the Hutchinson Family."

Lizzie died the next day. Services were held in the Vinyard Methodist Episcopal Church, and she was buried in the cemetery of the town her husband helped to found.



The loss of young Freddy and of Lizzie seemed to spell the end of the Tribe of Asa. Now only Asa himself and Denny, grown to be a lad of nineteen, were left. His daughter

Abby had married and only infrequently appeared with the troupe. Asa was fifty-one, and he was both feeling and showing his age. "His voice," said the Rochester *Democrat and Chronicle*, "still retains traces of its former sweetness, but it is badly shattered by countless seasons' work, and quivers and breaks with an utter disregard of the singer's feelings. And yet it is far from disagreeable."

But Asa was determined to keep his troupe on the road. To replace his son and his wife, he hired Alice Logan, a New York soprano, and Carrie Prescott, a New Jersey mezzo-soprano. Denny sang bass and Asa still kept the baritone parts. In order to preserve the illusion that a tribe of original Hutchinsons were on the road, Asa "adopted" both girls and constantly referred to them as "Hutchinsons." Alice, a little blonde only eighteen years old, and Carrie, a striking brunette with a "lovely, expressive face," gave the troupe the youth it needed, but they lacked the experience of more seasoned performers.

Asa remarried a year after Lizzie's death, and his new wife, Joanna, gradually assumed the directorship of the Tribe of Asa in its successive reorganizations.

The great Philadelphia Centennial year of 1876 offered Asa a golden opportunity to take a public bow. He had voted for Grant, but like so many others, he soon wearied of the numerous public scandals that occurred during the general's presidency. When the Republicans nominated Rutherford B. Hayes of Ohio at the close of Grant's second administration, Asa was jubilant. He immediately ordered John Church & Co. of Cincinnati to print a four-page songster entitled *R. B. Hayes, The People's Choice*. Authorship was indicated by two bold-face lines: "Written by Combs, the Bard of Maine. Arrangements and Additions by Asa B. Hutchinson." The pamphlet contained George W. Putnam's *Ridden by the Slave Power*, with music by Asa; Combs's *The People's Choice*, and *For Hayes, A Blaze of Golden Days*, with words by Asa.

Asa's troupe also campaigned vigorously for a sound mone-

tary policy and for a time supported the Greenback party in the election of 1876. Composed of extremists on the money question, this group favored currency expansion by the issuance of more paper money. Asa seemed to feel no inconsistency in approving both Hayes's tenacious adherence to hard-money views and the Greenbackers' expansionist program. He sang *The People's Choice* as readily as *The Greenback Song*, which was a parody on *Uncle Sam's Farm*.

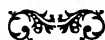
O ye tiller of the soil, in the East and in the West,
Come join the Greenback banner; 'tis the wisest and the best;
It floats from the St. Lawrence and down to the Rio Grande,
Inviting you to organize in one great union band.

The McCullochs and the Shermans, the bankers and their crew
Have prostrated all industry, and now make slaves of you
By burning up the currency, the soundest in the land,
Leaving us the poor trash made by an enemy's hand.

To rob us of our money, our liberty and rights,
Has been their heartless policy, and always their delights.
The basis of their money is always in their hand,
And when they make a move or two, down goes the farmer's land.

We'll drive these vampires out of power, blow their basis in the air,
And send the gold kings after it to climb the golden stair;
We'll fill the halls of Congress with men that won't give way;
But legislate in favor of honest industry.

We're going to elect our President the very next campaign,
And start the wheels of industry all o'er this broad domain;
We'll clear the mortgages from our farms and make wages high;
Bondholders than must go to work, or "root hog or die."



In 1878 Asa led his troupe westward, through Indiana, Illinois, and Missouri, to Colorado's booming, harum-scarum Leadville. Lying just below the timber line and almost two miles above sea level, the Cloud City boasted of a population

of some fifty thousand and bragged that its climate was "ten months winter and two months mighty late in the fall."

One of the richest mining regions in the nation, Leadville was first a fabulous gold camp, then one of the richest of silver regions, and eventually a treasure house of lead, zinc, and manganese. Fortunes were made, and lost, overnight. Whiskered miners, with State Street crib girls on their arms, downed champagne at twenty dollars a bottle. Over the bar in the Wyman Saloon hung a sign, "Don't Shoot the Pianist—He's Doing His Damnest." Cafés advertising for waitresses stipulated that they "must appear in short clothes or no engagement." Lady Luck was Leadville's goddess, and everyone kept her creed: "The only thing sure about luck is that it's bound to change."

Leadville was no place for Asa, but then it was no place for most of its miners, prospectors, teamsters, Celestials, and fancy women, whom a visiting Englishman described as "painted, noisy, and in all ways loveless." Like the thousands who jammed Chestnut Street, crowded honky-tonks, and threw handfuls of silver dollars at vaudeville actresses clad in red tights, Asa was courting chance on one of America's last mining frontiers, where

We could drink our booze in a wet profuse
an' buck the faro games,
An' pound the floor till our hoofs was sore
a-swingin' the dance-hall dames . . .
If a man should scoot down the final chute
that leads to the by an' by,
After leakin' his soul through a pistoled hole,
there wasn't no hue an' cry,
But we'd plant him deep for eternal sleep
in a respectable sort o' way,
An' go on a spree to his mercy
an' forgit the thing in a day.

Unfortunately Leadville's decline began just about the time Asa arrived, and he had neither the temperament nor the inclination to ally himself with the town's rough elements. A

visionary who for decades had fastened his eyes upon the stars, he lacked the practical judgment to compete with the wits of miners and promoters who salted diggings and juggled titles.

Distinguished by a flowing white beard, he tried to enter the economic and social life of the community. In 1879 he undertook the management of the St. Julian Hotel, but when he insisted on serving Negroes in the dining room, trade fell off. A few days later, still campaigning for temperance in a town where the word itself was virtually unknown, he quarreled with a neighboring saloonkeeper and was knocked down three times. "These rough experiences," commented an editor, "dampened Bro. Asa's ardor for hotel-keeping, and the St. Julian has passed into other hands."

In May 1880 Asa made a flying trip to Lynn to sell his interest in Old High Rock to John for twenty thousand dollars in order to dabble in mining. Together with one G. M. Brown, he located and claimed the Joanna C. Hutchinson lode in the Lime Creek district in Pitkin County. Gradually he extended his interests to other locations, but none of them ever realized the handsome profits of every miner's dreams.

Socially Asa was somewhat more successful. His hospitable home on East Fourth Street, under the management of his wife Joanna, became a mecca for Leadville music-lovers, who were entertained with handsome cakes, "models of the baker's art," and with coffee and oysters "served up in the greatest profusion."

The Hutchinsons were members of the Apollo Club, an association of fifty Leadville musicians who met at the Vienna Café to sing and eat and toast one another. In 1881, to celebrate the first anniversary of the founding of the club, Asa offered a toast to the music of the past: "It comes to us with its quaintness and its melody, and soothes us as a mother her tired child. It comes in all its beauty and freshness, to gladden our declining years, 'as the years glide by.' The quaint old melodies and harmonies awaken fond recollections of 'happy by-gone hours.' In listening to them, we see loved faces that surrounded us in youth, and

hear again sweet voices that 'long ago' were silenced in death. It washes away from the soul the dust of everyday life. We love it for the buried hopes, the garnered memories, and tender feelings it can summon at a touch."

As Asa neared sixty years, he reluctantly withdrew from public life after more than forty years of singing. Colorado had proved to be only another of life's dreams, and he returned to Minnesota to spend the few short years remaining to him in the peaceful shelter of the Hassan Valley. He took pride, though, in knowing that one of the original Aeolians was still on the road; Brother John was still singing.



For a time after the war's end John had been restless and dissatisfied, undecided about his future, uncertain which way to turn. Thinking he might find inspiration in the peace of the Hassan Valley, he journeyed, over familiar bogs, sloughs, and mud, to Hutchinson in July 1867.

Pendergast's Hotel, whistling with draughts, annoyed him. He wanted a tight and quiet room where he might be comfortable and find the peace necessary to compose songs. One morning he wandered aimlessly down Main Street. Suddenly he stopped. Directly ahead stood a small, weather-beaten cabin of logs. As John laid his hand on the rough timber, his mind flashed back to days with the ax and hours in the old sawmill when he hewed timber and dressed boards for his first home in Hutchinson. The place was now a blacksmith's shop.

"Anybody occupying the story above?" he asked the smith.

"Nobody. Nothing but cinders."

"Where's the stairway?"

"Gone, long ago."

John got a ladder and placed it against the cabin's side. When he stepped through the unglazed window of the second story, his feet sank into two and a half inches of soft ashes. Shoveling this accumulation out, he covered the floor with fresh

For 1867. **ENGAGEMENTS.** 1868.

HUTCHINSONS'

PROGRAMME.

Leavenworth, Kan., Monday, Dec. 19.	Jan. 24.
St. Joseph, Mo., Wednesday, Dec. 19.	Milwaukee, Wis., Monday, Jan. 27.
Hannibal, Mo., Thursday, Dec. 19.	Karlsruhe, Wis., Tuesday, Jan. 28.
Jacks-ville, Ill., Tuesday, Dec. 24.	Kenosha, Wis., Wednesday, Jan. 28.
Springfield, Ill., Wednesday, Dec. 24.	Waukegan, Wis., Thursday, Jan. 28.
Bloomington, Ill., Thursday, Dec. 24.	Chicago, Ill., Friday, Jan. 31.
Peoria, Ill., Friday, Dec. 27.	Kankakee, Ill., Monday, Feb. 3.
Galvburg, Ill., Saturday, Dec. 28.	Champaign, Ill., Tuesday, Feb. 4.
Mum-mouth, Ill., Monday, Dec. 30.	Bloomington, Wednesday, Feb. 5.
Harrison, Iowa, Tuesday, Dec. 31.	Jacksonville, Thursday, Feb. 6.
Fort Madison, Iowa, Wednesday, Jan. 1.	Quincy, Friday, February 7.
Kosciusko, Iowa, Thursday, Jan. 2.	Springfield, Saturday, February 8.
Mt. Pleasant, Iowa, Tuesday, Jan. 7.	Decatur, Monday, February 10.
Fairfield, Iowa, Wednesday, Jan. 8.	Tuesday, Feb. 11.
Ottumwa, Iowa, Thursday, Jan. 9.	Wednesday, Feb. 12.
Okaloosa, Iowa, Friday, Jan. 10.	LaFayette, Ind., Thursday, Feb. 13.
Des Moines, Iowa, Saturday, Jan. 11.	Logansport, Ind., Friday, Feb. 14.
Des Moines, Iowa, Monday, Jan. 13.	Indianapolis, Ind., Saturday, Feb. 15.
Tuesday, Jan. 14.	Greensfield, Ind., Monday, Feb. 17.
Davenport, Iowa, Wednesday, Jan. 15.	Knightstown, Ind., Tuesday, Feb. 18.
Thursday, Jan. 16.	Dublin, Ind., Wednesday, Feb. 19.
Clinton, Iowa, Friday, Jan. 17.	Cambridge City, Ind., Thurs. Feb. 20.
Saturday, Jan. 18.	Centerville, Ind., Friday, Feb. 21.
Freeport, Ill., Monday, Jan. 20.	Rickmond, Ind., Saturday, Feb. 22.
Rockford, Ill., Tuesday, Jan. 21.	Springfield, Ohio, Monday, Feb. 24.
Belvidere, Ill., Wednesday, Jan. 22.	Columbus, Ohio, Tuesday, Feb. 25.
Beloit, Wis., Thursday, Jan. 23.	
Tulsa, Ohio; Detroit, Mich.; Cleveland, Ohio; Buffalo, N. Y.; Rochester, N. Y.; Syracuse, N. Y.; Utica, N. Y.; Schenectady, N. Y.; Albany, N. Y.; Hudson, N. Y.; Poughkeepsie, N. Y.; New York, N. Y.; Newark, N. J.; Trenton, N. J.; Philadelphia, Penn.; Washington, D. C.; New Haven, Conn.; Hartford, Conn.; Springfield, Mass.; Worcester, Mass.; Boston, Massachusetts.	

"The Fatherhood of God, and Brotherhood of Man."
We'll reconstruct the Union on this glorious Christian plan,
We'll talk and sing while on the wing,
And ring it through the land.

Organized 1840.

New Series, 1868.

COMPLIMENTARY.

LAST GRAND SERIES.

Hutchinson Family's Concert

ADMIT THE BEARER AND LADY.

"SPERO MELIORA."

CONDUCTOR'S

TICKET.

FRONT AND BACK OF A CONCERT TICKET

hay and laid an old carpet over it. All day he labored, making a new home in his old cabin. His bedstead was a rude frame mortised into the logs, and his mattress was a straw tick.

The following morning he set out his small melodeon and hung a canvas curtain at the window. Already a new song was haunting his head. To the tune of the blacksmith's anvil, he wrote *The Fatherhood of God, and the Brotherhood of Man*, which he said was "forged with peace and good-will toward men."

We'll raise the song of triumph, when we see the hosts advance,
Our banners streaming high, and its mottoes shall entrance,
As the golden words they read, they will quickly join our van,
And vote for the cause of freedom and the brotherhood of man.

The fatherhood of God, and the brotherhood of man,
The cause of true religion is spreading through the land.
Oh, the fatherhood of God, and the brotherhood of man!
We'll talk and sing, while on the wing, and ring it through the land.

The first public performance of this song took place in Hutchinson on August 8. That evening John loaded his melodeon in a carriage lighted by torches and pulled by the small boys of the village. As he moved through the streets, the words and music of a new Hutchinson family song rang out.

Eventually ten thousand copies of the song were printed, together with an equal number of pamphlets exhorting Kansans to adopt woman suffrage, to "let the voice of woman plead its own cause; let the sympathizing heart, true to the instincts of her own nature, beat for the right, that the *vote* on this all-absorbing question may roll up such majorities for woman suffrage as to shame the few opponents." Two days after the concert John left Minnesota for Kansas to take a personal part in the controversy.

But woman suffrage, important as he thought it was, was not a big enough cause to absorb the energies he had given to abolition, and he returned to Lynn still restless and unsettled.

It was quiet, gentle Fanny who helped him reach his decision.

She spoke one evening as they sat together on the pinnacle of High Rock overlooking the sea. "I wouldn't worry 'bout tomorrow, John. You're made to sing. I knew that when I married you. I think in war or in peace you'll go on singing forever. You know, I feel the same way. I'm willing to go where you go—if you'll sing."

The encouragement was what he needed, and he stood beside her, tall and straight. "I think we ought to sing for temperance," he said simply.

"That's what I thought you'd say. You know, Mrs. Hayes, the Ohio governor's wife, champions the cause."

John nodded with the grave dignity so characteristic of him during his later years, and hand in hand they made their way down to Daisy Cottage. The decision was made. For more than a decade John identified himself with the advocates of temperance and sang with the same zest with which he had supported the abolitionists.

Early in January 1870 he arrived in New York to participate in a mass temperance convention. For days he had sweat through stacks of statistics and anti-alcohol tracts to gather material for a twenty-minute address on the evils of drink. Both Horace Greeley and Matthew Hale Smith, of the *Boston Journal*, encouraged him. But John needed little persuasion, for he remembered vividly the crusading efforts of Father Mathew among the inebriates of Ireland and England. He knew, too, that the Order of Good Templars, organized in 1851 among New York abstainers, had become international.

When John stepped upon the platform at Cooper Institute, he faced a crowd of thirty-five hundred zealous anti-rum advocates. He lifted a hand, and the audience quieted. John spoke simply, pointing out in his heavy voice that the number of crimes committed this year under the influence of drink in New York was 36,114; that the sheriff of Niagara County said three fourths of all crime could be traced to the "evil that befouls"; and that of twelve thousand persons convicted of crime annually in Massachusetts, nine thousand were intemperate. He

piled fact upon fact to build a tower of argument against alcohol.

He dwelt particularly upon the woman's rights question, saying earnestly that if women were given the vote they would cast their ballots to close dram shops. Paying no attention to only faint applause and loud hisses, he continued unperturbed: "God grant that she may obtain the right to do so! Voting would be done in a well-carpeted hall or church, and men and women would approach, arm-in-arm, with heads uncovered and deposit the sacred ballot."

He concluded, eyes aflame with his own enthusiasm, with an original poem, "Speed the Temperance Cause." Then he motioned Fanny and his son Henry to join him. Together they sang *The Drunkard's Child*, recently published and destined to become one of the more famous temperance songs.

You ask me why so oft, father,
The tear rolls down my cheek,
And think it strange that I should own
A grief I dare not speak:
But O, my soul is very sad,
My brain is almost wild;
It breaks my heart to think that I
Am call'd a drunkard's child.

Do not be angry now, father,
Because I tell you this,
But let me feel upon my brow,
Once more thy loving kiss:
And promise me, those lips no more,
With drink shall be defil'd,
That from a life of want and woe,
Thou'lt save thy weeping child.

Long before the last sad words died away, crisp muslin handkerchiefs were soggy with sentimental tears. The troupe retired, feeling they had struck a sure blow.

The orgy of emotionalism, however, was not yet over. A strange assortment of talent still remained on the stage. Edward

Z. C. Judson, known by the pen name of Ned Buntline, under which he wrote lurid adventure tales, testified that, although he had often been on the "wrong side" of the question, he must, as a soldier, stand up for the right. "The time has come for every Christian man to come out for prohibition," he said dramatically. "I have never written a line for woman's rights or in favor of women wearing anything but crinoline, but, knowing how much women are sufferers from alcohol and its influence, I wish every woman might have a vote and sweep rum from the country."

Perhaps Ned Buntline was playing a part, for his life had piled adventure upon adventure ever since he had run away to sea as a lad. His record as a sergeant in the Civil War was thoroughly discreditable, and he had been discharged by special orders.

The crowd cheered him and then sat forward eagerly as a man with alert, dark eyes, a heavy white mustache, and white hair worn long and brushed straight back, stalked to the front. This was the famous William H. Burleigh, former abolitionist and editor, now dedicated to the temperance movement. John thought he resembled Mark Twain. This day Burleigh was to recite the dramatic poem that won him the title of "laureate of the teetotalers." First called "Delirium Tremens," the poem was published in 1871 under the title of "The Rum Fiend."

In vain from side to side I turn;
 Fiends, fleshless forms, and tortured souls
Howl, grin, and shriek, and fierce eyes burn
 Into my brain like living coals!
See! how the snakes around me cling,
 Slimy and foul, with loathed embrace,
My flesh to pierce with fang and sting,
 And hiss their venom in my face!

Dark—dark—why, I am *dead*! I hear
 The sods upon my coffin fall.
They cease; and now how still and drear
 The grave will—faugh! I feel the crawl

Of the cold worms—across and through
My flesh they creep—and creep—and still
Feast as they go! I never knew ·
Such horror even the lost could thrill.

John, carried away by Burleigh's recitation, requested a copy, and the author obligingly wrote out the verses with a nervous, wavering pencil. A year later, after Burleigh's death, Fanny purchased the slender volume that contained all his temperance poems, and John carefully slid the manuscript stanzas between the pages.



The Hutchinsons' crusade for the cold-water cause was interrupted soon after this when John received from Sister Abby an invitation to visit her and her husband in Florida. Ludlow Patton's fortunes had swelled swiftly during the boom years of the Civil War, and he had accumulated enough to retire. The trip to Florida was the beginning of years of travel which took Abby to the far corners of the globe. Fanny and John, glad of an opportunity to visit the South, accepted her invitation and with their son Henry set off for Jacksonville early in March.

General Oliver O. Howard, in charge of the Freedmen's Bureau set up by Congress to "protect" former slaves from the "humiliations" imposed by the South's Black Codes, gave John introductions to carpetbag administrators. At Charleston, South Carolina, John presented General Howard's letter to Gilbert P. Pillsbury, carpetbag mayor.

The beautiful old city of wisteria and palmettos was shaken and weary, but it still looked bravely out past Fort Sumter to sea. John noticed that soft-spoken Southerners averted their eyes when passing a "damned Yankee," and he learned that many veterans had left the South to take up life anew in South America or on the plains of Texas rather than submit to northern control. He could not understand why so many "secesh" refused to take the oath of allegiance to the Stars and Stripes.

"They don't know the war is over," he remarked to Pillsbury.

The carpetbagger nodded. "I have received no courtesies from the aristocracy, and am afraid to go out without my body servant."

As John penetrated deeper into the South, he saw the scars of war. Great plantation homes, once centers of culture and ease of life, stood mournful and dilapidated, their Grecian pillars sagging as if bowed down under a great hurt. Fields, only a few years earlier rich with bursting balls of cotton, lay untended. For mile after mile ragged trenches cut the earth, zig-zagging through shell-torn woods and across pasture land to disappear behind a hill on which a deserted field gun stood solitary sentinel over desolation. Villagers still wore odd garments of Confederate gray, and once John glimpsed a military cap with the metal initials "CSA" bravely spread across its dirty peak.

Jacksonville, where the St. Johns River impulsively decides to turn eastward to the Atlantic, was a lazy city with a Spanish heart and a Yankee brain. Its sandy streets had seen everything—spade-bearded grandees, painted Seminoles, Andy Jackson's soldiers, Confederates and Federals, and a mixture of sailors, flint-eyed gamblers, and painted whores. Blockade runners, scalawags, and carpetbaggers had made the town their headquarters. Now Jacksonville was becoming a popular winter resort, and its residents—almost seven thousand of them—were pointing with exaggerated pride to the St. James, calling it the Fifth Avenue Hotel of Florida.

Twenty-five miles from Jacksonville was Magnolia Springs, a southern resort corresponding to the spa at Saratoga in the North. The Pattons were spending their vacation in this restful, quiet place and were drinking the therapeutic water that gushed from its mineral springs.

"It's beautiful," breathed John, wiping his forehead. He looked all around, slowly, as if drinking in the deep greens of the foliage and the cobalt blue of the southern sky. "I never dreamed Florida would be like this."

But as the days flew smoothly past, John and Fanny changed their opinion. Somehow the low altitude and the towering trees entwined with holly and creepers became oppressive, and they were glad to find an escape in singing.

At first Abby protested, but when she saw how determined John was to do something, she reluctantly agreed. A short tour was arranged to include St. Augustine, Orangedale, and other small towns. It was profitless enough, but it served to keep the restless singers busy when they were not going on picnics, eating oranges, and enjoying the "society of everyone we saw."

Anxious to entertain, the Pattons took the Hutchinsons to small Negro churches and to camp meetings. "A sort of barbaric splendor was all about," wrote John, "and the spirituals would pour forth from this African scene as if a company of celestial angels were singing." He learned many of the spirituals, including *My Jesus Says There's Room Enough; Sinner, You Can't Fool God*; and a slave chanty:

Jump, Isabel, slide water,
Ho, my aunty, ho!
Jump, Isabel, slide water,
Ho, my aunty, ho!

I wash my shirts
An' I nebber rench 'em
Ho, my aunty, ho!

Mosquito eat a-plenty
O' my buckwheat dough
Ho, my aunty, ho!

Yet John remained dissatisfied. Without fully realizing it, he was acutely homesick for New England hills and cities and for hard-working rivers like the Souhegan. The St. Johns to him was a lazy, beguiling stream that offered pleasure like a harlot, but never gave satisfaction. He was glad when the *Nick King* whistled round the bend and he saw his trunks put aboard.

The Magnolia pier was crowded with spectators the day the Hutchinsons set off for home. General R. E. Lee, with a group

of former officers, was standing on the deck, and the crowd had come to pay its respects to one of the South's greatest heroes. When the Hutchinsons spied Lee, they quickly sang three songs: *Uncle Sam's Farm*; *Come, Let Us Part with Lightsome Heart*; and a rollicking air, *Good-By, Brothers, Good-By, Sisters*.

That evening Lee sat at the head of the table in the steamer's crowded dining saloon, and John was placed at the foot. Negro waiters hovered about and whisked away course after course, while Lee, his expressive and somewhat sad face reflecting, John thought, the agony of war, chatted and sometimes laughed aloud. Noticing that the Hutchinsons were not drinking wine, Lee sent a bottle of his own sherry to John. "I could not drink it, of course," John wrote in his journal, "but then neither did I want the Gen. to feel I was refusing because I would not drink with a 'Rebel.'" Fortunately Lee left the table, and John's problem solved itself.



The trip to Savannah was pleasant, but the reputation of the Hutchinsons had preceded them, and their reception in the Georgia city was cold.

"Among the many public exhibitions now travelling through the South to amuse the people and put money in their own pockets," said the *Savannah Republican*, "we notice the Hutchinson Family. They are, perhaps, the only company of public performers who have been thoroughly identified politically with the Abolition ultra-Radical party of the North, and sharing fully in all its hate and denunciation of the Southern people. They have, for years, been indispensable adjuncts to radical political meetings in the New England States, with appropriate songs catering to the popular prejudice against the South, and doing what they could to help on the work of our misgovernment and humiliation. With the effrontery indigenous to their section, they now come South, we suppose, to receive their reward out of the hard earnings of our people. Their modesty is certainly refreshing. In a free country every man has a right

to his own opinion and to express it freely, and moreover, to be respected in all his rights as a citizen, while Southern hospitality would frown upon any breach of decorum toward a stranger, let him be whom he may; but, we submit, when the Southern people are called upon to pay a premium on hate and persecution, it is a little more than we would advise them to grant."

"That's a mighty long speech for a whupped Confederate." John jammed his hat on, yanked the brim over his eyes, and stalked to the newspaper office. A worn-looking editor asked him his business.

"Sir," said John in his most pompous manner, "can you tell me who wrote the notice of the Hutchinsons which appeared in your paper?" John carried one hand behind his back.

The editor sprang up, quickly swinging his right hand behind him as if he too might be reaching for a weapon. "I wrote it," he answered savagely.

"Well," John said grimly, "I'm complimented; yet it may injure us here." He let his hidden hand come forth empty, and the newspaperman looked relieved. John continued. "I came not to bring a sword, but peace. I brought an olive branch, hoping to assist in securing a more cordial feeling between North and South. I did not desire to prejudice the people."

"You have whipped us, but we are not conquered." The Southerner was tight-lipped. "Nothing will bring good feeling but fighting a common enemy like England. Did you ever sing *John Brown's Body*?"

"Yes, sometimes."

"Did you sing 'hang Jeff Davis to a sour apple tree'?"

"That was a verse from *John Brown*, so I presume we did." John wasn't going to retreat an inch. "Our northern regiments also sang it."

The editor sighed. "Then I don't see how you can expect to come here and get a friendly reception."

Honest puzzlement spread over John's face. "But the war is over."

"That's what you think," retorted the Southerner. "But I'd advise you not to try to sing in Savannah. Come again—in about thirty years."

That night when John walked warily to the concert hall, the place was dark, but lining the sidewalks were silent men whose cold and unfriendly stares convinced John that a program was impossible. Returning to his hotel, he followed the advice of a freedman, keeping in "de middle ob de road," for he preferred "death by shooting to dirking."

In Augusta and Atlanta, the troupe felt the same resentment, and scheduled concerts were either canceled or sung under most difficult conditions. "We were grieved at this show of sectional feeling," wrote John, trying hard to rationalize years of antislavery singing. "We might have sung 'hang Jeff Davis' in the excitement of war times, but we had no such sentiments in our hearts at this time."

All the way north, through Tennessee and Kentucky, the troupe fussed at southern "narrow-mindedness," although on every hand they saw the ravages of war and glimpsed a people whose very way of life had been destroyed. To the end of their lives, neither Fanny nor John could understand why Nashville and Louisville citizens did not turn out to applaud the singing of America's leading abolitionist singers. John was naïve enough to believe that, once the war was over, the South could immediately forgive and forget. When it did not, he passed its attitude off as sectional bigotry.



Lynn looked restful and inviting when the troupe finally returned home early in June. But John, restless as ever, immediately laid plans for resuming his temperance crusade. Caught up in the whirlwind of reform that swept the nation during the seventies, he enthusiastically attacked the evils of drink. To him the rapidly growing city was the spawning ground for corrupt municipal bosses, pitfalls of vice, dens of iniquity, and corner saloons. Brewers and distillers manufactured the

spirits that sapped men's strength, drove loving wives to the poorhouse, sent sweet girls to fates "worse than death," and set in motion a chain of political dishonesty that started with bummers and ended with governors.

With diligence and enthusiasm John clipped hundreds of poems that described intemperance, slum life, and urban viciousness. On the temperance platform he advocated that each person in the audience read T. S. Arthur's *Woman To The Rescue*, a tear-drenched temperance novel complete with a child sick with the fever, a mother with no funds to pay the doctor, and a father soaked in rum.

John read well. He had sufficient experience on the stage to be something of an actor, and he made the most of his histrionic talents in the crusade. His great voice swelled with indignation as he described handsomely appointed saloons, and quivered tenderly when he told of frail children without bread because their fathers dissipated wages along polished bars and brass rails.

His conclusion, spoken with the greatest emotion and punctuated by only half-suppressed sobs, was always the same. "Every day the drain of substance went on; every day saw a rain of tears in some stricken and desolate home; every day the evil work set itself up before the eyes of all. There was wreck and ruin everywhere, and no help!"

Just as he finished, Fanny, bowed as if with grief, tottered upon the stage, her pale face framed with a tattered shawl. She was the drunkard's castoff wife come to plead her case.

Go, weep as I have wept
O'er a loved father's fall;
See every cherished promise swept,
Youth's sweetness turned to fall;
Hope's faded flowers strewed all the way
That led me up to woman's day.

Go, kneel as I have knelt;
Implore, beseech, and pray,

Strive the besotted heart to melt,
The downward course to stay;
Be cast with bitter curse aside,—
Thy prayers burlesqued, thy tears defied.

Tell me I hate the bowl,—
Hate is a feeble word;
I loath, abhor, my very soul
By strong disgust is stirred
Whene'er I see, or hear, or tell
Of the Dark Beverage of Hell!

Most great temperance conventions saw the Hutchinsons on the platform. They sang daily for two months under the auspices of the Connecticut State Temperance Society and received thirty dollars a day. Their engagement pad was filled for weeks in advance, and they kept constantly on the move with only occasional vacations at Old High Rock. Pittsburgh cold-water advocates hired them for five weeks—and then refused to pay the salary agreed upon! John hurried the troupe on to New York, where they took part in a meeting of the Free Religious Association, and then rushed them to Connecticut for the Mystic Peace Convention.

Early in 1874 John sang at the National Convention of the Woman Suffrage Association in New York. Susan B. Anthony, champion of equal rights, presided, and among the distinguished speakers were Belva A. Lockwood and Phoebe Cozzens.

John had watched the woman suffrage movement grow ever since its first weak convention at Seneca Falls, New York, in 1848. There Elizabeth Cady Stanton had led liberal women to adopt a "Declaration of Sentiments" specifying their grievances in a document modeled after the Declaration of Independence. But only good-natured shrugs and ribald laughter greeted the declaration. Mrs. Stanton and her co-workers—Susan B. Anthony, Victoria Woodhull, and Belva A. Lockwood—were thought by many to lack common sense.

The result was the organization of a rival association that

called itself the Association for the Advancement of Women. John was fully aware of the rift between Mrs. Anthony and Mrs. Charlotte Wilbur, leader of the new party. He chose to remain loyal to the former. The conservatism of the new group—he thought it stuffy, self-righteous, and pompous—bored him, and he resented the charge that the Anthony-Stanton association was irresponsible and insincere. In addition he believed members of the Association for the Advancement of Women were middle-of-the-roads, and as usual he wanted quick, uncompromising action.

It seemed that he might be getting it when a virtual epidemic of local temperance crusades broke out in Ohio and New York and spread rapidly across the continent. John was overjoyed to read that women in Hillsboro, Ohio, under the leadership of Eliza Jane Trimble Thompson, were raiding saloons and forcing frightened grocerymen to close their doors.

Within a short time the crusade was caught up by women over the state, who openly proclaimed that the only way to end the liquor traffic was to solicit personally those engaged in it. They paraded through the streets, prayed at the doors of saloons, drugstores, and hotels, and gathered in churches to invoke the aid of the Almighty in their dramatic war against the evils of drink. So violent was their zest in Cincinnati that the *Enquirer*, quiet and friendly for weeks, broke the peace. It said bluntly that women should pray in churches and not on the sidewalks or in beer saloons, and it characterized the campaign as sinking to the level of malevolence and personal hate. By midsummer of 1874 the crusade had worn itself out in Ohio.

Both John and Abby watched developments with sympathetic eyes. They knew that the Civil War had unleashed tremendous energies among American women, who had labored as nurses, had supported the United States Sanitary Commission, and had been compelled by economic pressure to enter business and the professions. A new education, too, based on the normal school and coeducation in rapidly developing state uni-

versities, was liberalizing the minds of women and opening new economic opportunities to them. The battle between the sexes was joined. "In a long lifetime," wrote Abby, "I have seen but few men who are thoroughly just to women."



John's temperance programs were built with extreme care. Wise showman that he was, he had now learned the danger of overemphasizing the reform motif. Usually most of the songs were sentimental and comic, with only one or two devoted exclusively to exposing the evils of liquor. From Julia B. Nelson in Red Wing, Minnesota, he picked up *A Song of the New Crusade*, written to commemorate the work of Mrs. Thompson and the Hillsboro campaign.

"Have you heard the late news from Ohio?"

"And how goes the battle to-day?"

These now are the national questions

Since women have banded to pray.

You were terribly shocked when 'twas told you

That savages on the frontier

Were slaughtering women and children,

And anger succeeded to fear.

But a war upon women and children

More cruel than that of the knife,

And hatchet, and poisonous arrow,

Has, almost unheeded, been rife.

And where are the hands red with slaughter?

Behold them each day as you pass

The places where death and destruction

Are retailed at ten cents a glass.

Usually temperance rallies were long affairs with speeches, pleas, prayers, and singing intermixed. In Albany a thousand children gathered in Tweddle Hall to take the pledge and to recite temperance poems. Prizes ranged from eighteen volumes

of juvenile literature to a ten-dollar gold piece. John's troupe began the exercises with the first verse from *Cold Water*.

All hail! ye friends of temperance,
Who've gathered here tonight, sirs,
To celebrate the praises of
Cold water, pure and bright, sirs.
We welcome you with joyful hearts
Each generous son and daughter,
For here's the place of all, to shout
The praises of cold water.

After reformed drunkards had sobbed out the story of their salvation, the singers, led by Fanny, stepped forth to ease emotional tension with a comic number that changed tears to laughter. The *Horticultural Wife*, for years a favorite with audiences from the Atlantic to the Pacific, never grew old. Fanny sang it with relish.

She's my myrtle, my geranium,
My sunflower, my sweet majorum;
My honeysuckle, my tulip, my violet;
My hollyhock, my dahlia, my mignonet.
Ho, ho! she's a fickle wild rose,
A damask, a cabbage, a China rose.

We have grown up together, like young apple trees,
And clung to each other like double sweet peas;
Now they're going to trim her, and plant her in a pot
And I am left to wither, neglected and forgot.

Always, after the last burst of oratory from perspiring clergymen had died away, these temperance sessions closed with an appropriate verse from *The Old Granite State*.

Returning to Lynn after one of these sessions, Fanny leaned toward her husband. "Sometimes I think we sing too much."

"Too much! Why Fanny, what do you mean?" John lowered his paper in astonishment.

"People must be getting tired of us. Most of our songs are

twenty years old, some even more, and we sing six or eight at a single meeting."

He considered. "No, you're wrong," he said deliberately. "To the young folks our songs are new, and to the old folks they bring back memories of days when they were young and first heard the family perform."

"The stage is changing, John." Fanny spoke earnestly. "When Jesse was alive, he took a troupe to California; now the San Francisco Minstrels are singing in New York. Bret Harte, Mark Twain, and that fellow Joaquin Miller have set the public crazy with western plays and songs." She opened her little leather-bound journal and held it toward him.

"Look at the plays I've jotted down—*The Danites, or the Heart of the Sierras; The Terror of the Plains; Life on the Border*. People are flocking to stories about city evils too. *Life in a Tenement House* filled every seat at the Third Avenue Theater. Even the temperance folks liven their crusade with *Ten Nights in a Bar-Room*."

For the first time John showed some interest. "That's an idea," he muttered. "It's been playing ever since it opened in 1858. Maybe we could use a scene or a cutting from it. What do you think?"

"Well, I bought a copy in Albany and marked a passage we might use. Let's try reading the scene where little Mary implores her besotted father to give up drink. I'll take the parts of both Mrs. Morgan and Mary."

Train passengers looked up astonished when John's great voice boomed through the day coach. A wag put his finger to his forehead and pointed suggestively at John. But Fanny and John read well, and before long the entire coach was listening to selections from T. S. Arthur's famous temperance novel as adapted for the stage.

MARY. I'm going away to leave you and mother; our Heavenly Father has called me.

MORGAN. What shall we do when you are gone? Let me die too.

MARY. You are not ready to go with me yet—you will live longer, that you may get ready. Haven't I tried to help you—oh! so many times, but it wasn't any use. You would go out. You would go to the tavern. It seemed almost as if you could not help it—maybe I can help you better, father, after I die. I love you so much, that I'm sure the good angels will let me come to you, and watch over you always.

MORGAN. I promise that, God helping me, I will never go out at night again for a bad purpose.

MRS. MORGAN. Do you indeed promise that, Joe?

MORGAN. Yes and more.

MARY. What?

MORGAN. I'll never go into a bar-room again!

MARY. Never?

MORGAN. Yes; and what is still more, I will never drink another drop of liquor as long as I live.

MRS. MORGAN. Oh, husband, this is indeed happiness! Look! look at our dear child! Her eyes are fixed—she is dying!

MARY. Yes, mother; your Mary has lived long enough—the angels have heard little Mary's prayer! Father won't want any one to follow him, for he will be good, and sometime we shall be together. Don't you remember that little hymn you learned me? It all comes to my mind now, although I had not thought of it before for a long time. Everything looks so beautiful around me; I don't feel any pain now. Good-bye, father; I sha'n't have to ask you to be good to mother now. Good-bye, mother.

The Hutchinsons read publicly from *Ten Nights in a Bar-Room* only a few times. Temperance leaders, even though they approved the sentiments expressed in the play, felt that anything that smacked of the professional stage was unsuitable for rallies in which clergymen participated and which many children attended.



During the early seventies the Redpath Lecture Bureau and the American Literary Bureau were booking John's troupe, so that they frequently found themselves traveling on circuit with well-known lecturers, impersonators, and elocutionists. But

John struggled against his loss of business independence. He wanted no impersonal talent bureau to control the activities of the Hutchinsons. For years he had been independent, and he wanted to remain so. As soon as possible, therefore, he divorced himself from both bureaus to do his own bookings.

But by the late seventies most theaters that always had welcomed the family twenty years earlier were indifferent. Instead of appearing at Niblo's the Hutchinsons were forced to content themselves in New York with engagements at Methodist reunions and at temperance recitals in Methodist Episcopal churches. More and more, they were squeezed from brilliant Broadway to outlying districts—Bay Ridge and Flatbush.

Distrustful of lecture bureaus and disappointed by suburban bookings, John gradually made up his mind to take his troupe on a grand swing across the continent to tap fresh enthusiasm and dig deep into the pockets of Westerners. The "corrupting, offensive" New York stage was to be left behind. With great enthusiasm for a man in his late fifties, John arranged a series of programs that would fit the voices of Fanny and his son Henry. Henry's wife, Lillie, completed the quartet.

Although Fanny protested that her husband was relying too much on the use of old songs, John could not be budged. He felt the real strength of the family lay in the music of yesteryear that the Aeolians had introduced during the forties, and for this western trip he chose three selections from *The Granite Songster*, the first collection issued by the Hutchinsons.

Fanny pursed her lips at his choices and Henry insisted on the inclusion of more recent numbers, so John added one or two Negro spirituals, *The Creed of the Bells*, and, in deference to the reform movement, *The Temperance Ship is Sailing On*. "We sought," wrote John, "to retain the old favorites in our programmes, while giving a representation also to the best modern selections."

Early in 1878 the troupe began their last grand tour. It carried them to Chicago, then across Iowa to Council Bluffs, and on to Omaha, Laramie, Salt Lake City, Virginia City, Sac-

ramento, and finally San Francisco. The route followed the tracks of the Union Pacific. Audiences were larger and profits greater than even John had expected, and all along the way newspapers welcomed the Tribe of John with generous praise.

John was delighted when an Omaha editor said: "This modern 'Tribe of Jesse' is a living link between all that was sweet and inspiring in the impassioned voice of struggling freedom a generation ago, and all that is high and noble in this glad era of its triumph, in the arts and amenities of the intellectual, social and art-life of a thinking, earnest and progressive people."

In San Francisco John looked eagerly for the rowdy, boisterous city that Jesse had described years earlier when he was leading the Alleghanians into the mining camps of the Sacramento region. But the City of the Golden Gate had changed. It had sloughed off much of its former coarseness and had taken on a veneer of wealth and gentility. Everywhere the Hutchinsons looked they saw a progressive people intent upon making their community one of the best in the nation, though had John peered beneath the civilized surface, he might have caught a glimpse of frontier crudities still.

Unfortunately San Francisco, like New York, had no place in its handsome theaters for troupers of an old school. Modernity was as much in demand in the West as in the East, and the Hutchinsons had to content themselves by singing in churches, at Sunday school assemblies, and at temperance rallies. They sang fifty concerts in a period of three months and then left San Francisco for the Yosemite Valley, where Henry's first son, Jack, was born. His birth announcement was typical of the family into which he was born.

I was born in the Yo Semite Valley,
I am healthy and jolly and fat;
They will call me a Yo Semite baby,
But I'm a Green Mountain boy for all that.

Bitten by the wanderlust of late life, John determined to make the tour a vacationist's dream. Caring little for expense,

he took the troupe to San Diego and, after seeing the Mexican border, again swung north to go from San Francisco to Portland, Oregon, by boat. In Vancouver Abby Patton and her husband, just back from a tour of Europe, Asia, and Africa, spent a few days with them before leaving for a month in Alaska.

In practically every city they passed through—Seattle, Olympia, Walla Walla—John and his troupe sang. On October 27 they gave their farewell concert in San Francisco's Congregational Church, where the gifted Dr. A. L. Stone preached. Soon after Thanksgiving they were home again at Old High Rock. They had had a glorious trip, said Fanny happily.

"There has not been too much money in singing," wrote John, bending over his carefully kept ledger, "but the lean must go with the fat." Soon after, he sold a portion of his High Rock holdings at a tidy profit. This more than balanced the losses from singing during the lean years, and he was confident that the decade of the eighties would be more fruitful.

A Man Grows Worse for Wear

JOHN faced the sunset years, an elderly gentleman with white mustache, flowing beard, and long hair that hung over his neck in snowy wisps. In summer he affected a light linen jacket, and in winter he wore a long black overcoat with velvet collar. His twinkling eyes, ruddy cheeks, and ready smile still endeared him to audiences even though the baritone of his youth was cracked and thin.

No longer was it necessary for him to depend upon concert proceeds for a livelihood. He had husbanded his finances carefully, and by 1890 was said to be worth from sixty to a hundred thousand dollars. Royalties from songs still brought in a sizable annual amount; his real estate in Lynn paid profits; he was receiving a slight return from his land in Minnesota; and recitals added to his income. He was free, for the first time in a busy life, to enjoy himself and his family.

Retirement, however, was not in his mind. At sixty he still loved to travel and to bask in the acclaim of a friendly press. In 1881 he and Fanny toured Iowa and Illinois to sing throughout the western prairies the simple melodies introduced years earlier. More and more, John's programs dipped into the past for inspiration, and he repeated over and over again selections made popular during the forties and fifties. While variety entertainers were thrilling theater crowds with Joseph J. Sullivan's *Where Did You Get That Hat?* John was appealing to church groups with *My Mother's Bible*. After 1891, when Abby Patton published her musical arrangement of Tennyson's "Ring Out Wild Bells," John usually included his sister's song on programs.

During the seventies Abby and her husband spent much of



ASA HUTCHINSON AND WALTER KITTREDGE



JOHN, THE BARD OF LYNN

their time abroad. They had left Florida in April 1874, soon after John and Fanny visited them, to travel throughout England, Scotland, and Ireland, so that Abby might revisit the scenes of her foreign tour in 1845. With each step of the journey memories came flooding back. She recalled the handsome set of Shakespeare and the four elaborately decorated China mugs that English friends had given the troupe before the *Cambria* set sail for the United States. She thought of the garish handbills announcing their concerts in the Queen's Concert Rooms, and she smiled at the fancy tickets—almost as ornate as valentines—that Jesse had ordered printed from puzzled English craftsmen who thought the Yankees daft. Her letters to John were filled with “do you remember?”

From England the Pattons traveled leisurely to Italy, across the cobalt waters of the Mediterranean to the palm and date trees of the Holy Land, and back to see the Nile. Then swinging through central Europe, they visited St. Petersburg and Moscow.

Abby returned home gay and lighthearted. John thought she looked beautiful. True, she had aged a little. No longer was she the “red-cheek'd New England carnation” whom Walt Whitman knew. Now the white of her hair gave her a new dignity. But she was the same sympathetic, gentle sister. She still possessed the “exceedingly fine” temperament that the *American Phrenological Journal* had commented on in 1847, and her sense of “tune and imitation” was little impaired.

Abby frequently visited John at Old High Rock, and sometimes they found time to be with one another for a few brief summer weeks at the old homestead near Milford. Abby loved the old house that had once been Colonel Joshua Burnham's tavern. She called the room to the left of the entrance the bar-room, for there before 1824 “zig-zag” liquor had been served. The wide entrance hall running the length of the house had been the scene of family reunions, parties, and sings. The double funeral of Isaac and Benjamin had taken place there. Tom Thumb had driven his tiny pony cart through the front door

and down the length of the hall and afterward had eaten a dinner of roast lamb prepared by Nellie Gray, Rhoda's daughter. Hard cider was served with the meal, and the little fellow became tipsy. A little south of the house was the family burying ground, where John and Abby walked in the evening stillness, talking of old friends.

"Remember old Doc Kittredge, Abby?" asked John.

His sister nodded. "I remember he used to come up on the Eastern Railroad two or three times a week to give his patients a wet sheet and some vegetable remedies. Didn't he do some writing too?"

"That's right. He wrote those sideticklers we used to see in the hydropathic journals signed 'Noggs.' For years he carried on a medical feud between Noggs and Dr. A. E. Kittredge, and nobody in Lynn or in Boston either knew who Noggs was. He was Kittredge and he was Noggs."

They walked in silence for a time, then Abby said softly, "We've known a lot of good, interesting people, John."



In July 1883 John combined business with pleasure when he and Fanny journeyed to New Mexico to visit their daughter Viola Campbell, whose husband's business interests were there.

The Southwest, a land of vast distances and deep colors, intrigued John. Old Santa Fe sprawled listlessly in the little valley of the Rito de Santa Fe. To the east were the foothills of the Sangre de Cristo mountains and on the west towered the snow-covered peaks of the Jemez Range. The narrow streets of this ancient city, over which the flags of four nations—Spain, Mexico, the Confederate States of America, and the United States—had waved, delighted John. "Everything is so different from New Hampshire," he exclaimed again and again.

Determined to see everything, John rambled through ancient, narrow streets flanked by brown adobe houses, sniffed eagerly the fragrance of piñon smoke, and visited the Palace of the

Governors. His trip to the cliff dwellings, about thirty-five miles from Santa Fe, he considered among "the most important and interesting experiences" of his life. The Tertio-Millennial celebration was being held in Santa Fe in 1883, and John's showmanship pushed him into the news. He and Fanny gave two concerts in the Presbyterian church, and many an eye was moistened when he sang *Forty Years Ago*, a selection that recalled the native farm by the village town, the red schoolhouse, and the old elm with the name of a sweetheart cut into the bark.

On August 16 John started for Minnesota. His farm demanded attention, and he was anxious to support a project to bring a railroad into Hutchinson. It was pleasant to return to the Hassan Valley. Scores of old settlers stopped him on the street to chat of pioneer days and to exchange gossip.

Old friends sat together at evening in Asa's farmhouse, on a hill overlooking the valley, to talk of the days when Judson lived, when emigrant wagons crowded the valley, and when the sawmill ripped through new-cut logs. Sometimes William W. Pendergast, now the county superintendent of schools, drew up a chair to add his reminiscences. Asa recalled that in 1858 the troupe were singing their way eastward from Minnesota, a four-hundred-mile jaunt among people short of cash.

"We took grain instead of money," he said, "and were glad to have it."

"I remember we exchanged a twenty-five-cent ticket for every bushel of corn, and then didn't know what to do with the grain," added John. "Sometimes we sold it to a local miller, and sometimes, if we got enough, we shipped it to market."

"And the *Lowell Journal and Courier*, whenever we went to Massachusetts," chuckled Asa, "always said we had come from the 'land of the Ojibewa and Secates.'"

Excited by recollections, John picked up a scrap of paper and began penciling the verses of another song. Composition no longer was easy, and he crossed out and filled in until the sheet

was almost unintelligible. He never completed *In the Hassan Valley*, but the imperfect verses show what he attempted.

Peace and plenty many years

In the Hassan Valley.

Was the common lot of all

In the Hassan Valley.

Stocks and herds and singing birds

Smiling neighbors and kind words

Till the savage war whoop heard

In the Hassan Valley.

In Eighteen hundred sixty-three

In the Hassan Valley.

They murdered the whites and burnt the town,

And frightened all the country round

Yet the brave settlers stood their ground

In the Hassan Valley.

In Eighteen hundred sixty-eight

In the Hassan Valley.

Prices went up in real Estate

In the Hassan Valley.

We plodded on to make a home

And never leave, afar to roam,

Have quiet beds, and bread what am!

In the Hassan Valley.

On the twenty-ninth, Sister Abby's birthday, friends gathered in a grove by the river. The Hutchinsons sang and played. Asa's daughter Abby joined in, as did Kate, John's granddaughter. Somehow, the three generations of Hutchinsons couldn't stop singing. One song recalled another. *Away Down East* suggested *Springfield Mountains*; *The Bridge of Sighs* was followed by *The Miseries of Life*; and the comic *Zekel and Hulda* reminded the singers of the satirical *Congressional Song of Eight Dollars a Day*.

At Washington full once a year do politicians throng,
Contriving there by various arts to make their sessions long;
And many a reason do they give why they're obliged to stay,
But the clearest reason yet adduced is *eight dollars a day*.

When John returned to Lynn in October, he carried with him cherished memories of one of his most pleasant Minnesota experiences. In his pocket was a worn and faded daguerreotype case with pictures of his two children, Henry and Viola, taken before going to Minnesota in the fifties. He remembered he had lost the case on the Minnesota prairie and the next spring, after the winter snows had melted, had accidentally kicked it up with the toe of his boot. Asa had kept it for him for more than twenty years.



With the year 1884 came sickness and death. Fanny's health was failing and John was worried about her. Early spring brought the funeral of Wendell Phillips, the Hutchinsons' old abolitionist friend; on April 12 John's son Henry died after several months' illness; on November 25 Asa's life came to an end in his Minnesota home.

John's grief was intense. It seemed that all the world had suddenly become funereal. Death struck down one friend after another. Within a few years he attended services for Henry Ward Beecher, James N. Buffum, the widow of his brother Andrew, and John Greenleaf Whittier.

After Henry's death John threw himself into business affairs at Lynn. He remodeled cottages, supervised the work of twelve laborers and three masons, picked pears and apples, and collected rent from tenants. Fanny complained that he was either working or traveling. The Grand Army of the Republic wanted him to attend an encampment; old antislavery friends invited him to a reunion; prohibitionists appointed him to a committee to arrange for a temperance camp meeting. His mail carried more invitations than could be accepted.

He loved every bit of excitement and appeared to grow younger with the years. He greeted the year 1887 with a rhyme that reflected a renewed zest for life.

I've started on another year
With strong resolves for all good cheer;
Its future, judging by the past,
Some days of gloom will shadows cast.
But time commenced in dread and fear
At last may close in brighter cheer.
So jump aboard, put on the steam—
Through fogs of doubt hope's light will gleam.
Our faithful guide we'll trust for aye,
And when old '87 is gray
And like his brothers passed away.
For, good or ill, he must resign—
We'll sing once more our "Old Lang Syne."
His service closed, we'll never fear,
But welcome in the glad new year.

Even Fanny's increasing weakness and the horrible cough that racked her frail body did not deter John from moving about the country. In March 1888 he went to Washington to attend the fortieth anniversary of the beginning of the woman suffrage movement. John chatted with a score of old friends—among them Susan B. Anthony, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, and Julia Ward Howe—and he sang an original tribute to the memory of Lucretia Mott.

For two score years, through doubts and fears,
And conflicts fierce and long,
We've battled 'gainst the host of sin
And fortresses of wrong.
With our great leader pressing on—
Whose spirit ne'er could yield,
"Lucretia" waved the moral sword
That conquered every field.

Nor can our hearts today forget
The trio brave and free—
Our "Stanton" bold and Lucy Stone,
And earnest "Susan B."

With hope renewed again we come,
In love and joy to greet—
Throughout our ranks no feuds exist,
Our unity's complete.

John lingered in Washington to renew acquaintances and to attend receptions, where his quick wit and ready charm fascinated the ladies.

When he arrived home, he found Fanny in her last sickness. She died on May 4. On her gravestone was engraved: "She hath done what she could." She had herself requested that this inscription be used.

For a year a curtain of gloom was pulled down over John's exuberance. For the first time life became humdrum and lonely. He felt that everything of worth lay in the past. He searched his memory desperately to try to pin down his full life with Fanny: the day in Lowell when he saw her, a fresh-cheeked, winsome New England girl; the night when her cries of pain gave way to the wail of her first-born; her immaculate kitchen redolent with the spicy odor of gingercake; and the long tours and the countless concert halls where they both had sung. One day he found he could not recall the sound of her voice. He could feel her presence by his side as he strode along the rocky ridge of High Rock, but he could not remember the voice that had cheered and comforted. Then he knew that she was indeed gone.



John did not withdraw from the world to grieve in solitude. The older he grew, the more popular he became. Frederick Douglass invited him to Washington to attend the inauguration of President Harrison, and he was introduced to the President as the man who had sung Tippecanoe and Tyler songs for "Grandfather" Harrison in 1840. In 1890 Frank B. Carpenter began work on an oil painting of the singer. Years before, Carpenter had done a beautiful portrait of Sister Abby, and

now he wished to complete a picture of John for a seventieth-birthday gift.

The painting was not finished in time for the birthday in 1891, but the day itself was celebrated in Lynn with a huge reception. Abby had planned its details for weeks. Hundreds climbed the steep steps to High Rock on the afternoon and evening of January 4, and on the pages of a handsome guest book were written signatures symbolic of the pageant of a nation. Abolitionists, like the aged Theodore D. Weld, mingled with poets, artists, and men of business and finance.

"What a group that was!" wrote John later. "First, its centre, John, glad-hearted, soul-stirring, prophet-like, angel-voiced John, the last of thirteen brothers, the inspirer and strength of the most remarkable family of vocalists which ever travelled in this or any other land. Strong in the strength of years of right living; rich in the memory of continued successes in his singing missions; cultivated by constant contact with the progressive minds of two continents; happy in the love of an innumerable host of friends and admirers."

The party was a feast of music. Abby and John sang *The Old Granite State* and *Old High Rock* again and again. Then followed a long program of original poems and laudatory speeches. Abby's eyes were moist and the paper shook a little as she read her own rhymed tribute.

Dear brother, we have come to-day,
To bring you words of cheer;
To join with you to celebrate
The glad and opening year.
With wit and wisdom, art and song,
We'll follow into line;
And sing the chorus, loud and clear,
For auld lang syne.

Immediately afterward she presented John with a gold-lined, sterling-silver loving cup.

Frock coats and long dresses thronged the parlors of Tower

Cottage and spilled over onto an enclosed piazza where an orchestra played soft chamber music. Caterers elbowed their way through the crowd, offering coffee and frosted cakes. Never had John experienced such an occasion. Always eager to be the center of attention, he bloomed in the warmth of compliment. Every word and every gesture reminded him of the heyday of the Aeolians. He told endless stories and chuckled like a child at his own witticisms. His voice boomed above the crescendo of conversation, and his hearty laugh put to shame attempts at polite mirth. This was his day, and he meant to make the most of it.

Long after the last guest had departed, he and Abby and Ludlow Patton lingered on the dark height, pointing out the glimmering lights of Lynn. When John finally went to bed, he lay wide awake to relish until first dawn the "finest birthday a man ever had."

Next morning the world looked just the same. The sea rolled and slapped against Egg Rock, and Boston spires still stood in the curve to his right. "Why, seventy years don't make any difference at all," he wrote, and sat gaily down to bacon and eggs.



Nonetheless John began to feel that time was growing short, while, as he wrote, "there is still so much to be done." Restlessness seized him, forcing him to work on his memoirs, to accept as many invitations as possible, and to crisscross the country to sing at reunions, conventions, and old settlers' meetings.

In 1892 he hurried to Minneapolis for the Republican National Convention that renominated Harrison. John was delighted when the *New York Commercial Advertiser* said: "The quaintest character of them all was John W. Hutchinson. His long gray hair and kindly face made him a conspicuous character. He is a great Harrison man, is seventy years of age, and is known as the 'convention singer.'"

On the way home John stopped off in Chicago to watch the

construction of the World's Fair. "The Philadelphia Centennial," he wrote to Abby, "did not begin to compare with this. The West certainly knows how to play the big-wig." A week later he added a postscript to another glowing account of the fair. "Who is this new president of Princeton?" he asked. "This Woodrow Wilson?"

Back at Lynn, he puttered about his property. He replaced a flagpole and examined two new cottages that had been built to rent. In August he and the Pattons attended the unveiling in Concord of the statue of John Parker Hale. The crowd that jammed the statehouse yard witnessed a strange sight. They saw an ex-slave, a man about whom a storm of controversy had swirled before the Civil War, join John and the Pattons in singing *The Old Granite State*. It was Frederick Douglass. His voice, said John, was "a little high, but it blended perfectly."

The aging Bard of Lynn also sang a song composed for the occasion by Walter Kittredge and himself. During the last few years John and Kittredge had frequently appeared together on the concert stage, and in October they went to attend a national encampment of the Grand Army of the Republic in Washington. Kittredge was fifty-eight and John was past seventy, yet John appeared as young as his companion. The two of them stirred veterans' memories with *Tenting on the Old Camp Ground* and with Kittredge's less popular, but stirring, *No Night, Golden Streets, Scatter the Flowers Over the Gray and the Blue*, and *Sing the Old War Songs Again*.

Before leaving Lynn, John had searched his music library for a selection suitable for the reunion. He wanted something that would "drown the pangs of war and call back the comradeship of marching days." Finally, after consultation with Abby, he selected Charles Graham Halpine's *We Have Drunk from the Same Canteen*. He was nervous when he faced the boys of '61, but his voice confidently carried the message he had set his heart upon.

There are bonds of all sorts in this world of ours,
Fetters of friendship and ties of flowers,

And true lovers' knots, I ween;
The boy and the girl are bound by a kiss,
But there's never a bond, old friend, like this:
We have drunk from the same canteen.

When the bugler had sounded the last taps, John hurried home to make High Rock presentable for Abby, who was coming for a visit. He always fussed before his sister arrived. For years he had held her first in his affections, and after Fanny's death he had come to rely more and more upon her judgment. Together they had labored over the manuscript and proof of Abby's collection of short verses and epigrams. *A Handful of Pebbles* was published in 1891. John's copy was well thumbed, and he had grown fond of quoting excerpts to his friends. "Abby says," he would begin, and then would come the "pebble": "Some natures, like mignonette, give out delicious fragrance when left to their own sweet wills, but one touch of a selfish hand crushes out the sweetness, and leaves behind but a soulless weed." Or: "I would like a new form of ethics, which would permit us to criticize our friend in his presence, and to speak no ill of him in his absence."

To John, Abby was perfect, and he was always her favorite brother. In her schoolgirl diary she had written: "John is the most generous, the kindest, the best-beloved of all." Once when she was troubled by an overwhelming sense of sin, she took her youthful guilt to John. "He was good to me," she penned, "and said there is no need to worry. O! what an understanding brother."

John was shocked when he saw how she had failed. Somehow he had always thought her immortal. Now he realized that her time was growing short. "Abby will not stay long in this world," he wrote sadly. But no mention was made of her ill-health. Snug in a blanket, Abby sat for hours looking out to sea. October winds, sweeping in from the Atlantic, brought a touch of color to faded cheeks. She talked of the old days when the Hutchinsons were America's singing sensation, and she relived girlhood experiences in the Milford homestead.

"You know what I did the last time I was home, John?"

He shook his head.

"Well, I had just paid for a new floor in mother's room, and it was beautiful, clean and fresh, and smelling of new lumber. The day I left I told Nellie Gray I wanted to eat my last meal sitting on the floor. She brought it in, and the two of us squatted there like a couple of savages and lunched."

"I wish Viola had original ideas like that." Of late John had grown increasingly impatient with his daughter, who disapproved of his frequent trips. She thought an old man should stay at home. Abby, knowing that relations were strained between the two, kept silent.

John returned to New York with Abby early in November, and they sang their last song together a few days later.

Come, let us part with lightsome heart,
Nor breathe one chiding sigh,
To think that wing of rainbow plume
So soon should learn to fly.

On November 20 Abby was stricken with paralysis and she died on Thanksgiving Day with John at her side. At the services John paid her a brief tribute and sang *The Lord is My Shepherd*, *No Tear in Heaven*, and *We Are Almost Home*. Abby's body was laid to rest in the family burying ground in sight of the old homestead and the Souhegan.

"There was a charm about her that was irresistible," said the *Home Journal* in a long tribute. "Mrs. Patton was closely identified with nearly every reformatory enterprise for benefitting the human race. She was interested in the education of women, and was an earnest believer in woman suffrage, which movement she aided by tongue and pen. Her hand was ever ready to help the needy, and her words to give courage to the weary and hopeless. Religious creeds had no interest for her. She worshipped all good people, whether Protestants, Catholics, or Agnostics."

Looking at the hemlock-covered grave, John recognized the

end of an era. Now he was the only surviving member of the original band of singers. For the first time he admitted to himself that he was an old man, a man "on whom the hand of time had been laid . . . an echo from another age, a legacy handed down from a crisis when right was struggling close-matched against wrong."



Although he felt Abby's death keenly, John did not long allow it to dampen his enthusiasm for life. Showmanship was in his blood. He knew that continued singing at his age would not be profitable financially, but he was past worrying about money. Viola frequently attempted to impress the virtues of thrift upon her father, but the old man only shrugged and blithely checked railroad timetables.

In 1893 he announced that he was going to Chicago to attend the World's Fair, which he had glimpsed in its early development the year before. He didn't know how long he would be gone.

He remained for seven months, basking in the affection of friends, spending happy hours in the California Building, appearing on special programs, taking part on Colored People's Day, and singing in neighboring towns. He spent long hours with Frederick Douglass, chiding him good-humoredly on being Commissioner of Haiti; he sang *The Old Granite State* on New Hampshire Day and *Uncle Sam's Farm* on Pennsylvania Day; he paid tribute to Lucy Stone at a memorial service held in the Art Institute; he attended receptions given by Chicago's socialite, Mrs. Potter Palmer; and he gave temperance programs at a Universalist assembly and for the W.C.T.U. He was always in the news.

Even after the fair closed, John stayed on for a month to organize a new troupe that he hoped to take on tour. Viola was aghast when he wrote her that he had hired a bass and a soprano and had begun rehearsals. But John had pushed his strength too far. Threatened with pneumonia and fearing con-

sumption, he disbanded his company and returned to Lynn to take his rightful place at the head of the Thanksgiving table.

For the first time High Rock fretted him. His housekeeper, a singularly unimaginative woman, bullied him, and Viola, capable and practical, tried to order his daily life. He rid himself of the housekeeper, but he was forced to put up with his daughter. Even when she moved away, she attempted to guide his conduct by letter. John suspected that Viola felt he was incompetent to manage his own affairs. He paid no more attention to her than was necessary. Neither Fanny nor Abby ever had tried to checkrein him, and he wasn't going to let Viola harness him if he could avoid it.

He spent his mornings writing his story of the Hutchinson family. His cherry table was littered with notes, diaries, and manuscript. Now and again Charles E. Mann, editor of the *Lynn Daily Press*, joined him to discuss editorial problems. John had asked Mann to compile and edit the volume and had requested Frederick Douglass to write an introduction.

Afternoons were devoted to business details. John's tenants usually came in then if they needed advice or if their cottages required repair. His evenings were given over to music. This schedule was broken only if John was out of town on tour.

His later concerts reflected more and more the spirit of Yankeeland, the home of applesauce and beans. Like many older persons, he turned more and more to the reality of the past as his age increased. "A posse of years is riding fast on my trail," he wrote in his diary. The Yankee song he liked best was W. J. Florence's *Bobbin' Around*.

In August last on one fine day,
A bobbing around, a-round, a-round,
When Josh and I went to make hay,
We went a bobbing a-round.

Says Josh to me, let's take a walk,
A bobbing around, a-round, a-round,
Then we can have a private talk,
As we go bobbing a-round.

Then Josh and I went on a spree,
A bobbing around, a-round, a-round,
And I kiss'd Josh and Josh kiss'd me,
As we went bobbing a-round.

"That's real native music." John had fallen into the habit of talking aloud since he had been alone in his big house. Pushing his spectacles high on his forehead, he sank deeper in his favorite stationary rocker. "We've been an old-time Yankee family. I've given more than eleven thousand concerts myself, and I've no idea how many times I've sung *The Old Granite State*. Thousands anyway. How many times would you say, Abby? Two thousand? Oh, more than that. You and I together sang at least five thousand times, and we used the family song every time."

He pulled himself back to the present, left the chair swaying on its base, and began packing his traps in a battered valise. He had promised to help celebrate the centennial of the birth of William Cullen Bryant at Cumberland, Massachusetts.

A crooked, thank-you-marm road was jammed with market wagons, farm buggies, shiny-topped carriages, and gay buck-boards the morning John stepped from the train and started for Bryant's birthplace. John noticed that the festival was being held in a grove of young maples and wondered idly if the poet wrote "Thanatopsis" there. The speakers were gathered on a rude platform, on which a grocery box was propped bottom up to serve as a makeshift pulpit. On a tree hung a flower-bedecked lithograph of Bryant.

John was introduced to John Howard Bryant, the poet's brother, and then he was free to chat with Julia Ward Howe, whose *Battle Hymn of the Republic* was among the songs sung. When John had finished singing *The Old Granite State* and *After All*, an old shawled lady remarked audibly: "The Hutchinsons wa'nt like the singers we have nowadays. They were natural singers." Nothing could have pleased the old man more.

Returning to Lynn, he spent the summer of 1895 quietly at High Rock, reading galley proof on his story of the Hutchin-

sons and selecting illustrations for the book. Then he started off for Atlanta, where he had been invited to take part in the exercises on "Blue-and-Gray Day."

"It was a New South, indeed, that I saw," he wrote. To the great gathering of Confederate and Union veterans, John sang:

Tears and love for the Blue;
Love and tears for the Gray!

There was little requiring his attention at Lynn, so John, hating to be alone, spent the remainder of the year in travel. From Atlanta he journeyed to Richmond, Kentucky, to visit Cassius M. Clay, then by way of Chicago to Minnesota, and back again to New York in time to celebrate Elizabeth Cady Stanton's eightieth birthday.

On January 4, 1896, friends of the American Temperance Union honored him with a reception on his seventy-fifth birthday. The crowd cheered "until it seemed the old man could never acknowledge its affection" after John sang *Which Way is Your Musket A-P'intin' Today?* All the music and most of the words were original with John. Ditson had published it in 1882, and it had become one of the more popular temperance airs.

The question, my friends, is of vital importance,
The nation is waiting in anxious suspense;
Each voter can wield a *political musket*,
Then wield it, I ask, in your country's defense!
The issue before us is plain and unclouded—
Shall our nation be ruled by King Alcohol's sway?
I candidly ask *every* qualified voter,
"Which way is your musket a-p'intin' to-day?"



The older John became, the more he sought the company of younger people. He refused to live entirely in the past. Reliving past experiences, even from a life as adventuresome as his, could not satisfy his hunger for excitement.

Among his tenants at High Rock were several charming

women with whom he chatted for hours on end, spinning long stories of his stage experiences. He took them to dinner and escorted them to local entertainments. Viola thought he was spending too much money this way and feared some scheming vixen would marry him for his wealth. She scolded and warned him. "Woman was made for man," he replied. "This infernal habit of suspicion when a man seeks a woman's company is odious."

On July 16, 1900, the *Boston Post* announced that Mrs. Viola Campbell of Lynn had instituted proceedings to have her father, the famous American singer, declared incompetent. The old man was horrified when he was ordered to appear in court at Salem and prove his sanity.

Mrs. Campbell was relying on a scandal that everyone knew to help her prove her father's feebleness. In October 1894 Mrs. Mary E. MacDonald, a pretty young Lynn widow, had sued John for breach of promise and had asked for five thousand dollars damages. John denied he had ever promised to marry her, but he agreed to settle out of court for thirty-five hundred dollars.

The court was crowded when the sanity hearings began. John stepped jauntily to the stand. He said he would act as his own attorney and was sworn.

"How is your memory?" asked the judge.

"Memory?" replied the Bard of Lynn. "I remember the flavor of the milk at the maternal fountain."

The judge concluded that John was fully capable of managing his own affairs.

"I have worlds of love in my make-up," John told reporters, "and I would rather marry a good woman today than to have an enormous fortune given to me."

Viola, shocked by the old man's brazen reference to romance, steered him away from newsmen. He shook her hand from his elbow. "I shall return to High Rock by myself," he said with dignity.

A year later, however, Viola had better luck in court and

managed to get a conservator appointed to manage her father's finances.

The years ticked away with the ominous regularity of the grandfather clock on the stairs. In the big house with the pointed roofs and shuttered windows, John watched a twentieth-century world pass swiftly by. "I'm a way station now," he wrote wryly, "and even slow freights don't stop except on a flag."

His loneliness and exuberance entangled him in awkward situations. The more Viola deviled him, the more he turned for comfort to the ladies of Lynn. His name was linked with that of a girl from Gardiner, Maine, and then he became engaged to Miss Grace E. Vincent, a Lynn musician. "She played so sweetly upon her violin," John said, telling of his engagement, "that the music moved my heart as it had never been moved before." Together they went to the photographer's, where they posed with Grace's hand resting possessively on John's shoulder.

Within a few months the violinist sued him for breach of promise, but by this time John was courting Miss Ellen F. Wetherell, a suffrage worker. When Miss Wetherell sued him, she charged that he had proposed to her twice, once over the telephone and once on his knees in her home. She asked twenty-five thousand dollars damages.

John took up residence in Portsmouth in the late summer of 1905. There Russian and Japanese delegates had gathered to agree, if possible, on the peace terms of the Russo-Japanese War. Into this confused diplomatic scene, John swept confidently. He was going to sing the peace delegates into harmonious action. The *Fatherhood of God, and the Brotherhood of Man*, he felt certain, would solve a vexing international problem that even Theodore Roosevelt's big stick could not easily manage.

In the old-world atmosphere of Portsmouth, John renewed his acquaintance with Mrs. Agnes F. Everest, a singing teacher of Washington, D.C., who had studied abroad and was well

known throughout the East as an exceptionally talented woman. When in August she accepted John's proposal of marriage, he jubilantly arranged for an immediate wedding. On the marriage license, he gave his age as eighty-four and his profession as "reformer." Mrs. Everest was fifty and had been married twice before.

On the afternoon of August 24, a small group gathered in the Portsmouth home of Mr. and Mrs. William H. Horn. "Mr. Hutchinson," said the *Boston Journal*, "in a white flannel suit, which matched his venerable white hair and beard, sat before a big punch bowl, the contents of which he explained were entirely non-alcoholic." He passed out a glass of Maine punch to each guest and lectured on peace.

"The Japanese envoys were pleased by the talk I gave them. I told them to get together in brotherhood with the Russians and begin the great movement for brotherhood. They seemed to see it with my eyes. If they begin France will join in and Germany and England, until the whole world gets ahead to universal brotherhood."

When Mayor William E. Marvin announced that he was ready to conduct the ceremony, the bridal party gathered in front of a bay window. Just as the mayor was about to begin, John asked permission to make a few remarks. After many years, he said solemnly, he had found his life's mate, and they were to be wedded to work together for the cause of peace. Mrs. Everest nodded.

After the legal ceremony, Mayor Marvin pronounced a benediction written by John.

Thou art wooed, thou art wed,
Thou hast taken the vows of a bride.
May wisdom watch over thy head,
And happiness walk by thy side.
May the man thou hast chosen for thy life
Prove all that I wish him to be,
May he find every joy in his wife,
Success to thy husband and thee.

Mr. and Mrs. Hutchinson then sang a song of peace, with words by the bridegroom and music by the bride. As the applause died, John stood on one leg to show how young he was. His chatelaine wrist bag—an affectation he hoped would set a new style for American men—jangled as he tried a jig.

Newspaper artists sketched the wedding, and reporters jotted down John's pungent comments on life and love. Viola, who had refused to attend her father's wedding, cringed when John was quoted as saying: "It is natural for a man to love a woman. I have loved women—not woman—many of them. Perhaps it is because I've had so much love to give."

For three years John enjoyed the company of a congenial wife who loved song as much as he. Once more Old High Rock echoed with music. Even though his baritone failed rapidly after 1905, John continued to sing. Of an evening friends assembled in the parlor to laugh and chat and listen to music of past decades.

Early on the morning of October 29, 1908, as John rose to turn on a gas heater in his bedroom, he was seized with a heart attack, and the escaping gas asphyxiated him. Funeral services were held from Old High Rock on November 1, and the last of the Aeolians was placed in a vault to await burial in Lynn's Eastern Cemetery on Union Street.

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